



NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION GRANT

FISCAL YEAR 2026 – 2027 GUIDELINES & APPLICATION

WELCOME

The Neighborhood Beautification Grant (NBG) initiative, a component of the City's Community Partnerships & Engagement Division (CPED), is designed to engage and encourage residents to work with their neighbors on an enhancement and improvement project that promotes healthier, safer, and cleaner neighborhoods, while strengthening community connections and the social fabric within them.

The NBG objective is to cultivate healthy and resilient neighborhoods, support engaged and informed residents, stimulate a thriving community, and properly manage shared assets and spaces to achieve a collective impact in the development of neighborhood communities and service delivery strategies to improve the overall quality of life in Salinas.

ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION GRANTS PROGRAM

Building partnerships and relationships with Salinas residents is a priority for the City of Salinas staff and elected officials. The NBG supports building the desired connection with residents and helps with fostering long-term relationships, as complimented by the community. To carry on with the program, the City council approved an allocation of funds for beautification projects in the amount of \$42,000, to be equally distributed at \$6,000 to each Council District and the Mayor's office. Each council district representative is given the opportunity to identify and select an eligible proposed community project to allocate funds to.

The NBG was established to encourage community groups, organizations, and/or individuals to unite and plan a community project that will be considered for funding upon approval. Proposed projects must have a minimum budget of \$1,000 and not exceed \$6,000. **Applicants may only apply to one Council District or the Mayor's office.** You must apply to the district where your project will take place and/ or is visible. If your project takes place and/ or is visible in more than one district, then we recommend you apply for the mayor's allocation. All submitted applications will go through a cross departmental review team and be rated for funding using a scoring rubric. For your convenience, the scoring rubric that will be utilized to evaluate applications can be located on the last page of this document.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Any resident, group, and/or organization with a new or established community project in Salinas is eligible to apply. The group project must focus on beautification, restoration, neighborhood improvements, fostering neighborhood leadership and/or address neighborhood problems. Each group must include at least five volunteers or members to be eligible.

The following groups working on a project that will directly benefit their community are encouraged to apply:

- Residents
- Community-led groups
- Advocacy groups
- Art organizations
- Apartment or community associations
- Neighborhood watch groups

PROJECT CRITERIA

Projects submitted should:

- Be able to be completed within the grant established timeline.
- Promote neighborhood self-help efforts.
- Promote neighborhood improvement and beautification.
- Provide health and safety benefits as well as improvements for residents.
- Have confirmed neighborhood support.
- Be visible and accessible to all city residents.
- Support a neighborhood need.
- Include a detailed plan for ongoing maintenance as part of the proposal.

Note: We may modify and make suggestions to edit proposed projects. Alterations may decrease or increase project criteria implementation or size to maximize funds awarded.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Beautification Projects:

- Planting and landscaping in public spaces
- Community garden
- Engaging in weed abatement efforts
- Graffiti abatement
- Neighborhood clean-up
- Restoration efforts

Neighborhood-led Events and Support:

- Community building events
- Community festivals or activities
- Community projects
- Neighborhood contests or celebrations
- Public safety activities
- Neighborhood watch organization activities or support
- Free art lessons, experiences, exhibitions, and more

Please consult with the Neighborhood Services Coordinator about your project's eligibility and ask as many questions as needed before you submit your final proposal by the submission deadline. We want you to submit a strong proposal and be successful.

ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

- Murals and other art on city facilities or property
- The purchase of some types of equipment for public use on city parkland and/or facilities. (Improvements must be approved by Salinas Parks and Recreation)
- Some improvement to city parklands and/or public facilities. (Improvements must be approved by Salinas Parks and Recreation)
- Pre-existing operating expenses such as rent, utilities, and staffing costs.
 - Grant funds should enhance preexisting programs.

NEIGHBORHOOD SUPPORT

The proposed projects submitted should have support of the residents within their neighborhood. Projects on any facility must submit pre-approved documents (petitions, letters of support, minutes of community meetings, etc.) showing support for the proposed project.

PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

If a project involves any City departments, such as Parks and Recreation or Public Works and Transportation, groups should coordinate with appropriate staff prior to submittal and document their input/coordination in the submittal. If you are unsure who you need to contact, please request assistance from Salinasneighborhoods@salinas.gov

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Neighborhood Services Coordinator will periodically contact grantees to check in on the progress of your project. It is the grantees responsibility to respond to calls and/or emails. We will have two check-in calls or zoom meetings where we will discuss project progress and answer questions you may have as a group. After the completion of the project, each recipient must turn in a final report. We encourage you to turn in your final report within 7 days of the completion of your project and no later than the deadline, which is outlined on page 4.

GRANT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Groups interested in applying for a Neighborhood Beautification Grant must attend one of the information sessions or schedule an appointment with a Neighborhood Services Coordinator. The session will help answer questions about the application, the review process, and how the funds can be used.

- **Wednesday, August 5, 2026**
6:00PM – 7:00PM
- **Friday, August 7, 2026**
12:00PM – 1:00PM
- **Wednesday, August 12, 2026**
12:00PM – 1:00PM
- **Wednesday, August 19, 2026**
12:00PM – 1:00PM
- **Tuesday, August 25, 2026**
12:00PM – 1:00PM

- **Wednesday, September 9, 2026**
5:30PM – 6:30PM
- **Wednesday, September 16, 2026**
12:00PM – 1:00PM

Please contact the Neighborhood Services Coordinator assigned to your district to confirm your attendance at one of our information sessions.

<i>Mayor, District 1 & 6</i>	<i>District 2 & 3</i>	<i>District 4 & 5</i>
Karina Silva karina.silva@salinas.gov (831) 758-7166	Lizbeth Roldan Garcia lizbeth.garcia@salinas.gov (831) 758-7096	Guadalupe Perez guadalupe.perez@salinas.gov (831) 758-7019

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

All proposals will be thoroughly examined to determine if the project has met the requirements of City Departments and complies with City policies and activity characteristics such as feasibility, readiness, leveraging, and individual/organizational capacity. The City will also need to assess the staff's capacity to support the project in its current stage as well as long term. As noted, projects must obtain approval from the involved City departments and commission. All projects shall follow City public notification requirements; please allow enough time for this process to be completed within your project. As mentioned previously, all projects will be scored using a rubric to assess and score each project. Projects that can leverage city funding will be given high priority.

The review and grant process involves a pre-project assessment (see the permitting requirements section), application, review, approval, and reporting. **Applicants are required to:**

- Attend an Information Session hosted by Neighborhood Services.
- If the project is eligible and meets all necessary grant requirements, please complete, and then submit the application.
- Once submitted, staff will check applications for completeness and prepare the applications for departments to review.
- The involved departments will independently and collectively review the proposals, make suggestions to edit, and prepare comments to then recommend a projects list for council members.
- Following department reviews the final review team will use a scoring rubric to rank all eligible projects.
- The recommended ranked project list will be presented to City Council members for consideration and final selection. During this process, applicants may be asked to provide additional information or documentation related to the proposed project.
- All neighborhood organizations awarded a grant will be required to attend a recipient orientation to learn about reporting requirements, purchasing process, and reimbursements.
- Once the orientation has been completed, City staff will issue a notice to proceed, and your neighborhood organization can begin their approved project. Organizations **must** communicate project updates to their designated Neighborhood Services Coordinator.
- When your project is complete, you must close out the project within 7 days.

- Failing to maintain communication and closing out grant may result in a delay of payment or loss of funds.

Note: Grant participants may request any funds remaining at the successful completion of their project to be used in a manner relating to the originally approved project. This request must be submitted in writing to a Neighborhood Services Coordinator. All funds need to be exhausted within the designated grant timeline.

DEADLINE AND WHERE TO APPLY

- Applications must be completed and submitted **online** through the City of Salinas Neighborhood Beautification Grant application.
- Applicants who need a paper copy of the application may request one by emailing **salinasneighborhoods@salinas.gov**.
- Submit applications by the extended deadline on **Friday, September 18, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**
- Include all required information and documents.
- Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
- Only one application per group will be considered.

Applicants who need assistance accessing or completing the application may contact Neighborhood Services at salinasneighborhoods@salinas.gov.

NEXT STEPS

- Identify the council district you will apply to, or if you will apply to the mayor.
- Attend one of our information sessions listed below or set-up a one-on-one orientation with a coordinator and ask any questions you may have about your application.
- Submit your Final Application by the extended deadline on **Friday, September 18, 2026, at 5:00pm**

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, August 3, 2026 - Application is available

Wednesday, August 5, 6-7pm - Information Session

Friday, August 7, 12-1pm - Information Session

Wednesday, August 12, 12-1pm - Information Session

Wednesday, August 19, 12-1pm - Information Session

Tuesday, August 25, 12-1pm - Information Session

Wednesday, September 9, 5:30-6:30pm - Information Session

Wednesday, September 16, 12-1pm - Information Session

Friday, September 18, 2026 - Extended deadline to submit application

Friday, October 16, 2026 - Applicants notified if they are awarded or declined

Friday, October 26, 2026 - Mandatory Recipient Orientation must be completed by this date

Note: The above dates are subject to change as needed.

PROJECTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY FRIDAY, MAY 21, 2027.

Final invoice, report, and supporting documentation must be turned in no later than June 1.

Reimbursement checks will not be issued until project is complete and verified by staff.

Applicants who fail to comply with deadlines, will not be considered for future funding.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR GRANT WRITERS

- Computers and copiers are available for your use at any of our public libraries.
- Grants may be submitted in Spanish.
- All applications must be legible.



NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION GRANT

FISCAL YEAR 2026 – 2027 APPLICATION

Application Check List

- ☐ **Attend information sessions**
 - All applicants must attend an information session (pg.2)
- ☐ **Completed application packet**
 - Review guidelines
 - Complete Neighborhood Grant Application
 - General information
 - Project information
 - Activity or project plan
 - Budget and funding source
 - Group leaders
- ☐ **Neighborhood support**
 - Letters of support from neighborhood
 - Pre-approval letter (pg.2)



NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION GRANT

FISCAL YEAR 2026 – 2027 FINAL REPORT

The City of Salinas requires all grant recipients to prepare a final report on project activity and expenditures. This report serves as a valuable learning tool for both program staff and grantees.

Remember your group must submit a final report **with original receipts** to be reimbursed.

Please use this form for your report.

Please write a brief summary of your project - one or two paragraphs that provides an overview including the projects goals and outcomes:

Please answer the following questions:	Did not meet	Partially met	Met some-what	Met very well	Does not apply
Our project promotes neighborhood improvement and beautification					
Our project is visible to residents					
Our project supports a neighborhood need					
Our project built positive relationships among residents in our neighborhood					
Our project supported leadership development within our neighborhood					

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

	Less than 25	26 - 50	76 - 100	More than 100
How many residents were involved in your project?				
How many people did you anticipate would benefit from your project?				
How many will actually benefit?				

We recognize that circumstances can change, possibly impacting on project implementation. What, if any, difficulties did you encounter, why did they occur, and what refinements or plans did you make to overcome them?

Please provide feedback about your experience with this grant: How was the experience for your organization and what could be improved?

ATTACHMENTS

Please attach pictures, copies of any public recognition, awards, press releases or news articles pertinent to this project.



NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION GRANT

FISCAL YEAR 2026 – 2027 FINANCIAL REPORT

Use the following form to submit your final expense report.

Copies of all receipts must be submitted in attached envelope or scanned and emailed.

Amount Awarded: _____

[illegible]

NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION GRANT

FISCAL YEAR 2026 – 2027 SCORING RUBRIC

Agency: _____ Project Title: _____

Total Score: _____/36

Areas of Assessment	MISSING (0)	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (1-3 points)	ADEQUATE (4-6 points)	EXEMPLARY (7-9 points)
Plan and funding model: <i>a. complete application with detailed project plan b. funding and expense plan summary.</i>	<i>Proposal does not include a plan or an adequate funding and expense model. Plan includes projects not allowed in this grant.</i>	<i>Proposal is vague and contains limited plan; funding model is problematic. Plan includes projects not allowed in this grant.</i>	<i>Proposal is adequately defined and contains strategies to implementation; funding model is adequate.</i>	<i>Proposal is clearly defined and contains a solid plan to support implementation; model is realistic.</i>
Proposal is feasible and eligible for requested amount of funds: <i>expense budget is reasonable for project size.</i>	<i>Proposal does not include a funding and expense report.</i>	<i>Proposal vaguely includes a funding and expense report; project does not maximize funds.</i>	<i>Proposal adequately includes a funding and expense report; project adequately maximizes funds.</i>	<i>Funding and expense report are clearly defined; project will maximize funds.</i>
Proposal encourages community involvement and supports a neighborhood need.	<i>The proposal does not have 5 or more neighbors in support of the project and does not identify a clear community need for the project.</i>	<i>The proposal has 5 or more neighbors in support of the project but does not adequately define the community need for the project.</i>	<i>The proposal has 5 or more neighbors in support of the project and general defines the community need and impact for the project.</i>	<i>The proposal has 5 or more neighbors in support of the project and identified a clear community need and impact for the project.</i>
Agency reliability to complete project in a timely manner.	<i>Not likely, prior awardee who did not completed project or grantee with no references or prior history.</i>	<i>Somewhat likely; prior awardee who did not complete project or grantee with no references or prior history.</i>	<i>Likely, first-time applicant with good references or has completed a NBG in the past.</i>	<i>Very likely; has completed a NBG in the past or similar grant project recently plus good references.</i>