

Neighborhood Enhancement Partnership Program
Questions & Answers from Current & Previous Information Sessions

Q1: Can volunteer labor include students' community service hours?

A1: Yes

Q2: Do we need to submit the W-9, Treasurer's report and the Board member listing at the time the application is due?

A2: Yes (For exceptions, see the response to Q19)

Q3: Do you evaluate how much funding the organization has?

A3: No, treasurer's reports are requested to verify organization's solvency.

Q4: What does "vendor" mean before Legally Authorized Signature?

A4: "Vendor" is meant to state "organization".

Q5: Are you aware of the Fairfax County invasive plant program?

A5: Organizations are encouraged to use existing Fairfax County resources, such as

Invasive Management Area (IMA) Volunteer Program

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/IMA/>

Fairfax County **Permit Application Center**, "When a Permit is Required"

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/construction/whenapermitisrequired.htm>

Call the Permit Application Center Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm at 703-222-0801 or 703-324-1555.

Permits Center Ombudsman, Tina Gum - 703-324-1876.

Stormwater Management:

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/stormwater/whatis_swm.htm

Q6: Do local businesses grant discounts for community groups' supplies?

A6: You are encouraged to independently work with local businesses to pursue discounts or partnership opportunities.

Q7: Can we plan a party after to celebrate and include the costs?

A7: Yes, if the celebration aligns or supports your stated Vision Elements.

Q8: How many people applied last year?

A8: 48 organizations applied during the previous funding cycle.

Q9: How are proposals evaluated?

A9: Proposals are evaluated by a selection committee, consisting of graduates from the county's community leadership programs (including, but not limited to, groups such as the Neighborhood College and Citizen Police Academy). The selection

committee will be assisted by an advisory team of county staff who will provide administrative support for the application process.

The evaluation of all eligible applications shall be conducted on the basis of the information provided with the application and the evaluation criteria on page 5 of the application package. Applications may receive up to the maximum points allowed based on the ability to respond to each criterion element.

Q10: Will the selection committee members vote on a project if they are from that neighborhood?

A10: No, they will not vote in the case of a conflict of interest.

Q11: What if we get an award but fail to get a permit?

A11: The community organization will be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and approvals, where required, prior to release of County funds or commencing the project. All approval letters should be submitted within sixty (60) days of award notification or the award may be rescinded.

Q12: Can a project be part of a county program? For example marking stormwater drains or Adopt-a-Highway projects?

A12: If you are doing an Adopt-a-Highway project or other established (publicly or privately funded) program which provides all the resources you would need except for the volunteer labor, it would not be eligible. However, if the project is part of a larger neighborhood initiative, then the project would be eligible for NEPP funds.

Q13: Would planting along the beltway sound barriers be duplicating an already funded public or private program?

A13: Community groups may apply for funds to replace landscaping elements removed in the VDOT HOT lanes/beltway construction, on community-owned property.

Q14: Can we fund a project that has already begun or that needs to begin in October in order to complete on time?

A14: The intent of the NEPP is to stimulate and fund new projects, rather than supplement on-going projects or operating expenses.

Q15: Can you give us the VDOT Liaison contact information? The Fairfax County Dept. of Transportation liaison contact information? The Virginia Power Company liaison?

A15: Please view the Dept. of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) utilities page at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/publicworks/>
Miss Utility of Virginia: <http://www.missutilityofvirginia.com/> / 800-552-7001

Q16: Will you rate a neighborhood HOA higher than a private nonprofit recreation/pool association?

- A16: No, proposals for organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are rated based on the Evaluation Criteria on page 5 of the application package.
- Q17: Are you going to consider the district or neighborhood the organization is located in when making award decisions?
- A17: No, proposals for organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are rated based on the Evaluation Criteria on page 5 of the application package.
- Q18: Can related but separate organizations serving the same neighborhood apply separately for the NEPP?
- A18: Distinct organizations pursuing grants for projects may apply for separate projects, or may jointly submit a single application for one project. Two or more organizations should not submit separate applications for the same project serving the same neighborhood in order to be awarded more than \$5,000.
- Q19: Can the project be the creation of the community organization itself? If so, do we need to already have a BOD listing, W-9, mission, etc.?
- A19: Yes, exceptions may be made for emerging organizations, as cited in the application package, if explanation is provided in the application submission.
- Q20: Can having a fundraiser be part of the labor match?
- A20: Yes, provided that the overall project meets the Evaluation Criteria on page 5 of the application package.
- Q21: If we submit for 2 projects, and one gets awarded, can we choose which one we do?
- A21: No, award decisions will be made by the selection committee.
- Q22: Are City of Fairfax community organizations eligible for this grant?
- A22: No.
- Q23: Is a neighborhood watch that is a part of a community association eligible to apply if the community association also applies?
- A23: If the organizations are both under the same tax identification number, they will be considered the same organization. They may submit more than one application, but will only be eligible to receive one award.
- Q24: Is the educational arm of a community organization that has a separate tax id from the community organization eligible to apply?
- A24: As long as they meet the other eligibility criteria, they could apply as a separate organization.
- Q25: Our neighborhood center is run by a nonprofit organization in partnership with the county. Are we eligible to apply for a project that is not currently funded?

A25: Nonprofit or faith-based organizations that have an active partnership with a neighborhood or civic association are eligible to apply; however, the project must not duplicate privately or publicly-funded programs in that neighborhood.

Q26: If we have already done some work on removing invasive plants and want to do more, is this eligible?

A26: Yes, community associations may apply for NEPP funds to renew previous community efforts.

Q27: Does the amount of cash we put into the project from our organization's budget count as private funding, making it ineligible?

A27: No, your organization's funding may be counted towards your match.

Q28: Do we need to submit all permit approvals within 60 days or just show evidence that we have applied for the permits?

A28: Please show evidence that your organization has initiated the process to obtain any necessary permit approval(s) within 60 days of an award.

Q29: If we are given an award in May, would we only have until December 31, 2010 to complete the project?

A29: No, you would have one year from the time you were notified of receiving the award.

Q30: Are some vision elements rated higher than others?

A30: No.

Q31: If there are questions about our application, will you seek additional information from us or will it simply be scored lower for being incomplete or not fully understood?

A31: Your application should be clearly written so the evaluation committee can easily understand the project you propose to complete. However, the evaluation committee may ask clarification questions of the organizations.

Q32: Can we get feedback if our project is not awarded?

A32: Yes, County staff will meet with you upon your request to summarize the scoring and evaluation of the committee and may offer other potential resources for completing your desired project.

Q33: Can we include the project management as volunteer hours?

A33: Yes.

Q34: Can the community developer assist us with our budget?

A34: Organizations should prepare their own cost estimates in their application package. See Question/Answer #35 for the role of the community developers.

Q35: What is the role of the community developers?

A35: The Dept. of Systems Management for Human Services (DSMHS) Community Developer develops on-going collaborative relationships with residents, neighborhood groups, community and faith based organizations and a variety of public agencies to identify and address community needs and facilitate neighborhood and community building. Community developers act as liaisons between community members and the human services systems leading to increased access by the community members to local government. Community developers leverage county resources and maximize participation of local businesses and community members in meeting community needs using strength based principles and best practices.

More information on DSMHS is available at

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dsm/regions/>

Q36: What is the name of the HOA liaison?

A36: Michelle Thompson – Dept. of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection.

You may read more details about this role at:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/hoa.htm>

Q37: You have a question where you ask to describe the vision element the project will address, but none where it asks how the project meets the county goals, yet the evaluation criteria measures how well the project fits within the goals of the NEPP. How will you rate how well the project fits within the NEPP goals?

A37: The NEPP goals should be reflected in the narrative of your project description on Form 2 of the application package. Scoring will follow the evaluation criteria on page 5 of the application package.

Q38: If we have a professional donate his/her services to the project (electrician, architect, etc.) is it valued at the \$20.25 volunteer hourly rate?

A38: You may estimate the value of pro bono professional services at the rate for which they would charge for their services.

Q39: Can volunteer labor include members of the community doing fundraising?

A39: Yes.

Q40: If we realize that some of our costs are higher than expected and did not ask for the maximum award amount, could we seek to increase the amount of count match?

A40: No.

Q41: If we need an interpreter/translator for our project, can we include those costs into our request?

A41: You may, but you may also wish to seek out a community member, school parent liaison, religious leader or other bilingual individual to provide the translation or interpretation.

Q42: Can projects include work to clean-up property not owned by the HOA/community association? (i.e., Fairfax County park land)

A42: Yes, however, organizations should communicate with the landowner to ensure that the project will not duplicate existing efforts and to obtain permission.

Q43: What is the definition of a neighborhood-wide meeting?

A43: The NEPP application asks for applicants to include their organization's mission, geographic boundaries, number of members, and date of last **neighborhood-wide meeting**. The neighborhood-wide meeting is any meeting that is routinely scheduled (bi-annual, annual, etc.) to gather the entire neighborhood together at one time.