



CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL
APRIL 3, 2023

SUBJECT: Approval of the Beautification Commission's recommendation on the Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program to award the requested grant amount for the following neighborhoods upon successful completion of the entryway work depicted in the applications: Ashbury Park (\$5,000), Camden Court (\$4,306.50) with the condition that the proposed invasive burning bush is changed for a non-invasive shrub, and Knightsbridge Gate (\$4,700).

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: City Manager

EXPENDITURE REQUIRED	\$ 14,006.50
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ 25,000 (FY 2023-24 BUDGET)
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ 0
LINE ITEM NUMBER	101-172.00-816.002

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program was established in 2015 and offers Homeowners Associations in the City of Novi a 50/50 matching grant of up to \$5,000.00 for the beautification of neighborhood entrances.

The proposed projects may be permanent physical improvements, such as the addition or rehabilitation of entrance signs, the construction of flower beds, the planting trees, the upgrading of lighting, or the installation of other related entryway improvements. Guidelines require that all improvements must be located on the perimeter of the neighborhood and visible from the public right-of-way, that they cannot include recurring or maintenance improvement items, and that organizations are not eligible to be awarded a grant in consecutive years.

Four applications were received before the deadline of January 27, 2023: Asbury Park, Camden Court, Knightsbridge Gate, and Oberlin. City staff organized the applications for review by the Beautification Commission and provided the

evaluation criteria. Project need, impact, feasibility, and sustainability were taken into consideration when assessing applications.

Of the four applicants The Commission recommends the requested grant amounts be awarded to the following three (3) neighborhoods:

1. Ashbury Park (\$5,000)

The Beautification Commission commented that the Annabelle Hydrangeas proposed may prove problematic for Ashbury Park as they require a great deal of water and can grow to be very large. They suggest that Ashbury Park consider reducing the number planted so that they are 3 to 10 feet apart or to consider choosing a different type of hydrangea or even an ornamental grain or grass to be planted instead.

2. Camden Court (\$4,306.50)

The Beautification Commission generally approved this plan but were very concerned to see that the landscaping plan included several burning bushes, an invasive species. They respectfully request that, as a condition of the grant approval, that Camden Court work with their landscaper to select a different, non-invasive shrub to replace the burning bush in their plans, with a preference for a native shrub.

3. Knightsbridge Gate (\$4,700)

The Beautification Commission fully endorsed this project, noting the need given the age of the existing sign. The project would both beautify the entrance and improve visibility for those looking for the subdivision.

The fourth application received, for Oberlin, is not recommended for approval this cycle. Both staff and Beautification Commission members were concerned at the lack of a formal landscape plan and also noted that the existing subdivision entrance is both attractive and very, very new. While they appreciate the application they would suggest that, should Oberlin apply again in a future cycle, they should present a more comprehensive plan and wait for the subdivision to be at least 10 years of age.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval of the Beautification Commission's recommendation on the Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant Program to award the requested grant amount for the following neighborhoods upon successful completion of the entryway work depicted in the applications: Ashbury Park (\$5,000), Camden Court (\$4,306.50) with the condition that the proposed invasive burning bush is changed for a non-invasive shrub, and Knightsbridge Gate (\$4,700).