



NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS CAPITAL GRANTS

\$40 million to community groups, non-profits and local governments for projects that “re-green” or “re-nature” neighborhoods,

<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/tools-partners/grants-and-resources/nature-grants>

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program description: The Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program supports community-led projects that benefit historically marginalized communities, protect, and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, support climate resilience and increase people’s experience of nature at the community scale. The capital grants program from the 2006 natural areas bond has helped support some of the region’s most beloved places and spaces including Gresham’s Nadaka Nature Park, Portland’s Cully Park, Milwaukie’s Riverfront Park, Tigard’s Bull Mountain Park and countless others. As with the capital grants program from the 2006 natural areas bond, this program will include several rounds of grant solicitations in future years.

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants are available to fund land acquisitions, urban transformations, restoration projects and neighborhood livability. The resulting capital asset (park, property, building, habitat, etc.) must be publicly owned, however partnerships and collaboration are key to successful projects and non-government organizations can apply for funding.

To date, this program also includes the Nature in Neighborhoods [Community Choice grants](#), which is piloting a participatory process to recommend up to \$2 million in grant funding to Metro Council to invest in projects selected by the community in Metro Council District 4 (Western Washington County) and that benefit BIPOC and other historically marginalized communities.

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program milestones completed as of December 2022

- Creation of the program design and review committee of community members to advise on the development of the solicitation guidebook for the community choice grants pilot round including a broad recruitment for committee members, resulting in 44 applications. 6 members initially started on the committee, and in fall 2022, an additional 5 individuals joined.
- Since winter 2022, 16 meetings of the community choice grants program design and review committee to help shape the [community choice grants guidebook for project solicitation](#).

- Ongoing work with a community engagement consultant team to help develop the community choice grants pilot community engagement approach and activities with a focus on ensuring as many community members as possible in Metro Council District 4 have a chance to get engaged and weigh in on which projects will receive funding.
- Collaboration with park providers in Western Washington County including Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District, Washington County and the cities of Beaverton, Forest Grove, Hillsboro and Cornelius.

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program milestones completed in 2022 (by the numbers)

Category	During calendar year 2022
Number of community members participated on the program design and review committee	11
Number of meetings of program design and review committee	16
Number of meetings with park providers in Metro Council District 4 about the community choice grants	~25

Looking ahead

In early 2023, the team finalized a program handbook and launched an initial solicitation for the bond's Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program. Parks and Nature staff aims to have a funding recommendation for Metro Council consideration and approval by summer 2023. After this initial funding round, the capital grants team plans to compile lessons learned and update the program handbook as needed before subsequent solicitations.

The Nature in Neighborhoods Community Choice grants officially launched in March 2023 with information sessions and idea generating events.