

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.

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) must be publicly owned, however partnerships and collaboration are key to successful projects and non-government organizations can apply for funding.

This bond program also includes the Nature in Neighborhoods [community choice grants](#) program, which utilizes participatory grant-making novel participatory approach that defers decision making power to community members to propose, develop, and choose which projects to recommend for funding in their communities 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.

Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program milestones completed in FY 2023-2024

Category	Milestone completed from 2023 to summer 2024
Number of projects awarded Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants	12
Total dollars awarded via Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants	\$5.2 million
Number of community choice grant awards made in the pilot round	15
Dollars awarded via Nature in Neighborhoods community choice grants	\$2.3 million
Total number of votes cast during two phases of community choice grants process (preliminary and final vote)	2,000
Total meetings of community grant review committees	26 (22 total for community choice grants process and 2 for each round of Nature in Neighborhood capital grants)

Looking ahead

With two rounds of capital grants and one round of community choice grants complete, the team is continuing to evaluate lessons learned on how to increase the reach of these grant programs and build the strongest pipeline of projects to meet bond requirements and align with bond criteria.

Based on Parks and Nature’s experience managing this type of program in the 2006 natural areas bond, we anticipate that it will continue to take additional time, effort and outreach to build a solid pipeline of projects that are eligible for grant funding. The team continues to plan for a third solicitation and funding round for Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants in spring/summer 2025 aiming to award up to \$5 million in funds. The team is also planning for a second round of community choice grants, kicking off in 2025 with awards in 2026.

The team will continue to work with grant recipients to finalize contracts to implement the grant awards. Each grant recipient has up to two years to execute a contract and three years to complete a grant funded project.

More resources on the Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants program

- [Nature in Neighborhoods capital grants handbook](#)
- [List of Nature in Neighborhoods grant awards from 2023](#)
- [List of Nature in Neighborhoods grant awards from 2024](#)
- [List of Community Choice grants awarded in February 2024](#)

Figure 1, map of capital grants investments as of June 2024 (NOTE: map only includes 2023 capital grant awards and first round of community choice grant awards)

