

# Leon County Community Beautification Program Overview

Through the Leon County Community Beautification Program, individuals, neighborhood and community groups, and schools can apply for *reimbursement* funds and limited technical assistance to plan, organize and implement small beautification, litter reduction, or place-making projects.

Small projects may be *reimbursed* a maximum of \$500 per project. These funds are offered to support the planning and implementation of projects that physically enhance the beauty of Leon County. Project examples include litter and illegal dumping clean-up events, neighborhood plantings, and other community enhancement, beautification, or clean-up projects. Projects that promote sustainability, community collaboration, and leadership are encouraged. The goal of this program is for community members to meet and work together to further beautify Leon County.

*A maximum of \$500 will be reimbursed for any given project or initiative while funds are available.*

## Funding Eligibility

All Leon County neighborhood, community, and student groups/organizations/associations are welcome to apply for funds through the Community Beautification Program. All applications must encourage inclusive neighborhood or group participation. Projects must be undertaken within the geographic boundaries of Leon County.

- ***All applicants must demonstrate that their project or activity will:***
  - Focus on beautifying and/or creating engaging places.
  - Generate a public benefit in an inclusive and cooperative manner.
  - Involve members of the community in the project.
  - Abide by all local, state and federal laws and regulations.
- ***All applicants must agree to the following guidelines:***
  - Applicants may be asked to match their requested reimbursement amount with contributions of volunteer hours and other in-kind contributions.
  - Applicants must submit project photos to the Leon County Office of Sustainability for record, and by doing so give permission to Leon County to use and publish photographs for the purpose of publication and promotion without compensation.
  - Applicants that fail to undertake projects as outlined in submitted applications may be eliminated from consideration for future funding opportunities.

*Leon County reserves the right to remove any physical installations or improvements on public land at any time.*

## Project Examples

- Litter Reduction (e.g. a park cleanup event)
- Invasive Species Removal
- Illegal Dumping Clean-up
- Graffiti Removal and Painting
- Neighborhood Planting

## **Ineligible Applicants and Activities**

### ***Funds will NOT be awarded to/for:***

- Government agencies, political or partisan groups, exclusive clubs or associations, and non-Leon County-based groups.
- Applicants who have failed to document a community contribution.
- Applicants who failed to successfully carry out or maintain a project for which funds were previously awarded.
- Anything that could be construed as a private benefit or gift to an individual or organization.
- Political organizing, advocacy, or election related activities.
- Programs that promote or endorse a specific religious affiliation or discriminate against any group.

### ***Funds must NOT be used to:***

- Support ongoing programs or services.
- Pay for the applicants operating expenses that are not directly related to the project for which the reimbursement is awarded.
- Pay for expenditures or financial commitments made before the organization's reimbursement application was submitted.
- Purchase computers, digital cameras, video cameras or other portable electronic equipment.
- Purchase food or alcohol.

## **Evaluation**

Each application will be evaluated by the Leon County Office of Sustainability staff based on the above requirements, and the following evaluation criteria:

- ***Objective***
  - Corresponds with the objective to address at least one of the three areas of sustainability (environment, economic, social).
- ***Description and Benefit***
  - Provides a clear description of what the project is and why it is proposed.
  - Provides a clear description of why fund reimbursement is being sought.
  - Provides a clear public benefit by outlining how the community will be improved as a result of the project, with anticipated outcomes clearly documented.
- ***Community Participation and Impact***
  - Community contribution is documented, demonstrating broad community participation and support.
  - Encourages inclusive community participation and provides opportunity to bring people together.
  - Encourages interaction between different groups, such as different cultural groups, age groups, tenants and business owners.
- ***Planning and Design***
  - Has a reasonable budget.
  - Has a realistic timeline and a clear beginning and end.
  - Designed for low maintenance and the applicant and stakeholders commit to project maintenance, with most maintenance undertaken by the applicant.