

## Valparaiso Awards Record Number of Neighborhood Grants

The City of Valparaiso has awarded a record 21 new grants in the 2021 Neighborhood Improvement Grant program, providing \$260,730 in funds to support neighborhood unity and community improvements. Coupled with the matching investments by the neighborhoods themselves, this grant cycle will result in more than \$366,000 in positive impact for the community.

“In a year when so many of us spent more time than ever in our neighborhoods, it was inspiring to see so many neighbors corroborating and submitting their ideas for improving their connections and spaces,” said Mayor Matt Murphy. “The combination of extraordinary proposals and an increase in funding from the Redevelopment Commission means that we were able to more than double our grant support this year,” said Maggie Clifton, Valparaiso’s Director of Community Engagement and administrator of the grant program.

The projects funded this year include a shared pavilion for Hatch Lake (to match a playground they’ve recently installed), added ADA accessibility for a playground in the Banta neighborhood and many sidewalk upgrades, among other worthy projects. The City of Valparaiso’s Engineering Department will be working hand in hand with neighborhood groups to maximize the impact of the grant dollars, with many projects targeted for school zones or to improve neighborhood accessibility.

The neighborhoods receiving grants in 2021 include Audubon Estates, Banta, Beauty Creek Estates, Bicentennial Square, Bridgewater Estates, Campbell Meadows, Central, College Hill, Essex Park, Harrison West, Hatch Lake, Hawthorne, Jessee-Pifer, Keystone Commons, Lakepointe Gardens, Oak Grove, Parkwood Estates, Shamrock, Sierra, Timberbridge and Windsor Park. “It was especially rewarding to see that more than a third of our applications came from neighborhoods that had never gathered to submit an application before and that we were able to provide funding for every qualified project submitted,” said Clifton.

The City of Valparaiso introduced the Neighborhood Improvement Grant program in 2018. Since that time, 59 grants totaling more than \$580,000 have been awarded to neighborhood groups, supporting individual projects with community-wide impact. With matching contributions, the Neighborhood Grant Program has resulted in a positive impact of more than \$775,000 since 2018. To learn more about the Neighborhood Improvement Grant program, including how to apply for funding next year, visit the Community Engagement page at Valpo.us.

### Photo caption:

The City of Valparaiso has announced 21 Neighborhood Improvement Grants for 2021, totaling more than \$260,000 in funding for neighborhood projects with community-wide appeal, such as sidewalks and signage, a pavilion and playgrounds. To learn who won and how to apply, visit the community Engagement page at Valpo.us.