

City of Valpo Awards Neighborhood Grants

The City of Valparaiso has notified eight neighborhoods that they've been awarded funds through the Neighborhood Improvement Grant pilot program, announced Maggie Clifton, Valparaiso's Director of Community Engagement. The Neighborhood Improvement Grant pilot program was created to give residents an opportunity to have direct input and influence into the improvement of Valparaiso's neighborhoods. In total, \$55,500 was awarded in this pilot program, provided by the City of Valparaiso's Redevelopment Commission.

"We had some excellent proposals submitted and the program definitely accomplished its goal of uniting neighborhoods and encouraging partnerships between the city and its neighborhoods," said Clifton. Projects were evaluated based on neighborhood involvement, neighborhood investment, community-wide benefit, feasibility, longevity, and partnerships.

The eight neighborhoods receiving funds include Banta, Beauty Creek, Berkley Park, Central, College Hill, Forest Park, Jesse-Pifer, and Oakwood Estates. Projects include neighborhood branding signage, sidewalk links, lighting, wildflower gardens and even a beach volleyball court in Berkley Park. "We're grateful that the Neighborhood Improvement grant will help us to add an attractive entrance sign to give our neighborhood of Forest Park more of a sense of place and community," said Christine Harsh. "We really have come together recently to organize a work day and decide what we'd like the entrance to look like. It's been a positive experience to gather and share ideas."

"We are grateful for Maggie's hard work and diligence in identifying some great opportunities. This first round of applications shows that the citizens of Valparaiso take great pride in their city and are interested in making Valparaiso an even better place to live," said Rob Thorgren, president of the RDC. The city hopes to continue the Neighborhood Improvement Grant program. To learn more about the program visit, <https://www.ci.valparaiso.in.us/1636/Neighborhood-Improvement-Grant>.