



# **NEIGHBORHOOD SIGN TOPPER GRANT PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK**

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**If you would like to see a copy of the Neighborhood Identification Sign Request Form, please go the Neighborhood Partnership Office (NPO) website at <http://www.cityofcarrollton.com/departments/departments-a-f/community-development/grants-incentives-neighborhood-improvement-in-action-impact/myneighborhood/sign-topper-grant> and click on the application link.**

<b><u>Table of Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Sign Toppers - Identification signs for Neighborhoods	1
Neighborhood Qualifications	2
Neighborhood Support Requirements	2
Design Requirements	2
Maintenance Requirements	4
Match Requirements	5
<b>Section 2: Filling Out the Application</b>	<b>5</b>
Provide a Complete Project Descriptions	5
Neighborhood Support	7
How did you involve your neighborhood in designing the sign	8
Total Project Cost	8
Neighborhood Matching Monetary Contributions	9
Final Budget Calculations	10
<b>Section 4: Submitting the Application</b>	<b>10</b>
Staff/review	10
Neighborhood Presentation	11
<b>Section 5: Implementation</b>	<b>12</b>
Agreements	
Installation Guidelines	12
Disbursement of Funds	12
Project Close Out	13

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

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### **Sign Toppers - Identification Signs for Neighborhoods**

Sign Topper grants are available through the City of Carrollton's Neighborhood Partnership Office. Neighborhood Associations may apply for grant funding and installation of neighborhood identification signs in their respective neighborhoods.

These decorative sign toppers are a great way to:

- Help neighborhoods be recognized for their unique character
- Increase the visibility of a neighborhood to non-residents
- Encourage a sense of belonging and neighborhood pride
- Complement other neighborhood identity efforts

These guidelines detail the requirements and procedures for sign design/approval, sign fabrication/purchasing and sign installation.

Playing a major role in this mission are the nine (9) members of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC). The NAC was established by the City Council to help develop and recommend general policies, strategies and programs related to the development, preservation, improvement, and revitalization of Carrollton's many neighborhoods. The NAC's responsibility is to review and approve Sign Topper Grant requests for funding. Every neighborhood has a Neighborhood Advisory Commissioner that represents them. Check with the Neighborhood Partnership Office (NPO) to find out who represents your community. They are a great resource.

Qualified Neighborhoods Must:

- Be an organized Homeowner's Association or Neighborhood Association within City limits
- Register with the City's Neighborhood Partnership Office on an annual basis
- Be at least 10 years old
- Have a minimum of 30 residential units
- Match 1/3 of the total cost of the signs with sweat equity or donated funds

## **Neighborhood Support Requirements**

Neighborhood support for your grant request is extremely important to the NAC when reviewing your grant proposal. The sooner the neighborhood can begin working together, the more effectively organized it will become. What does your neighborhood need to know from the start?

Will the community support this project?

Neighborhood meetings are a great way to measure support in your neighborhood before you apply for a grant. At this meeting, you should determine who is willing and able to volunteer the time necessary to successfully complete the proposed project and establish a project team.

A neighborhood survey is a good way to gather information on neighborhood ideas and support. Conducting a neighborhood survey can provide you with answers for two evaluative criteria used by the Commission when reviewing grant applications.

The first criterion is the Partnership Factor – you can determine who in your neighborhood is willing to volunteer time or money for the sign toppers.

The second criterion is Neighborhood Support – once you complete and prioritize your survey results, it can help you determine how many of your neighbors are in support of the proposed project.

Survey instruments you may consider include asking questions door-to-door; circulating support petitions; mailing out surveys, etc. Through the Neighborhood Partnership Office, your neighborhood has access to Survey Monkey, an online survey tool, for **free**. Ask your project team or other neighborhood volunteers to help with this element. This is part of sweat equity.

## **Design Requirements**

Every sign topper is unique. Neighborhoods are encouraged to work together on creating meaningful designs that highlight the community culture. Sign toppers can include logos, insignias, established date and name of the neighborhood. Don't have any of those things? This is a good time to establish the community personality. Does your neighborhood have a logo? This is a great time to create one. What would really show your community's identity? The neighborhood association can place the insignia on the sign.

## **Fabrication Requirements**

Design your sign topper following the Sign Design Specifications. The sign company will likely charge the association for any design work, so have your volunteers do as much of it as they can. **The sign design the association submits must include the sign color, font, shape, logo or insignia, thickness, size and sheeting type.** Once you have finalized your design, send the sign design mock up to the Neighborhood Partnership Office for review. The design needs to be included in the Sign Topper application.

## Design Specifications

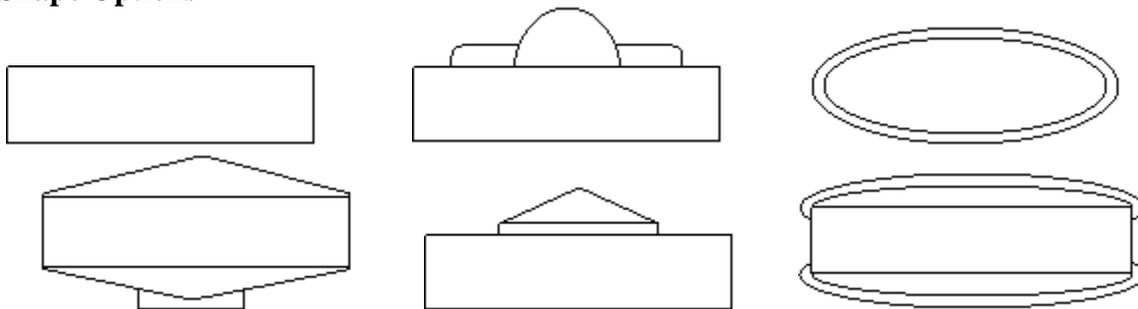
### Colors Available



### Fonts Available (bold)

- **COPPERPLATE GOTHIC BOLD**
- **Georgia**
- Goudy Old Style
- **Tahoma**

### Shape Options



### Substrate

Sign substrate shall be anodized aluminum with a thickness of .08 inches with corners clipped to a 1-inch radius.

Overall height no greater than 9 inches. Overall length 18 inches.

### Sheeting

Must be Type I – Engineering Grade Retro-Reflective sheeting, Type II – Super Engineering Grade Retro-Reflective sheeting or Type III – High Intensity Grade Retro-Reflective sheeting with a manufacturer’s warranty of a minimum of seven years for outdoor use.

Each sign shall be double-sided, with the identical legend, insignia, on both sides of the sign.

**Contact the Neighborhood Partnership Office at [community.development@cityofcarrollton.com](mailto:community.development@cityofcarrollton.com) or 972-466-4299 for sign companies that are approved vendors.**

For more information on the grant, check out the Sign Topper Grant on the City of Carrollton website at:

<http://www.cityofcarrollton.com/departments/departments-a-f/community-development/grants-incentives-neighborhood-improvement-in-action-impact/myneighborhood/sign-topper-grant>

## **Maintenance Requirements**

Sign Toppers will have a long-term positive impact on your neighborhood and the City of Carrollton as a whole. All sign topper application recipients are required to maintain their property in perpetuity. Because of the high probability that signs toppers will be lost due to auto accidents, inclement weather or vandalism, applicants are required to order 2 – 3 additional signs to be stored at the City of Carrollton Sign Shop for replacement.

When any neighborhood identification sign needs replacement due to vandalism, loss, or normal wear, the neighborhood association will be responsible for all associated costs. In order to install the replacements the neighborhood will need to submit a new request form. All procedures for fabrication, approval and installation will apply to replacements. Any additional signs will be paid for with neighborhood funds.

The City of Carrollton reserves the right to remove any neighborhood identification sign, which becomes unsightly. When possible, the City of Carrollton will notify the neighborhood association of the removal and the location where to pick up the sign.

There is no cost for installation, as the Carrollton Public Works Department will install all signs.

## **Match Requirements**

The maximum amount of the City's contribution to any one entity for a project under the NEMGP Sign Topper Grant is five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per year. Neighborhoods are required to match the city's contribution with cash donations, in kind donations or volunteer labor. The neighborhood is required to match \$1 to every \$2 the city contributes.

It will be important to understand if your neighborhood can afford the sign toppers. On average an individual sign topper costs about \$45 a sign.

**Donated cash** must be available in your organization's bank account at time of application. A statement or some other form showing account balance is required for documentation.

**Volunteer labor** (sweat equity) will come from the community to do the work for the project. The current volunteer labor rate is \$15/hour. See Neighborhood Match explanation on page 10 for examples.

**Section 2: Completing the Application**

Preparing your application should not be difficult if you have done all of your homework. Take the time to answer the questions accurately. Try to identify creative approaches to involve all neighbors in the design process.

The NPO accepts Sign Topper applications year round. Once submitted the application will be reviewed by NPO staff for completeness. Public Works must review the submitted application for approval. No incomplete applications are accepted. Once Staff approves the application, it will be placed on the agenda for the next available NAC meeting for approval.

➤ **Provide a complete project description.**

- A. **Describe the project in detail.** Describe how the neighborhood designed your sign topper, and how your neighborhood decided to use this design. How does the design help promote neighborhood identity? Sign toppers can include logos, insignias, established date and name of the neighborhood. What sign color? Which font? Do you have a logo?
- B. **How many TOTAL street signs does your Homeowner’s Association (HOA)/Neighborhood Association (NA) currently have?** Not all street signs have to have a sign topper. Count the number of existing street signs within the boundaries of your neighborhood.
- C. **Specify the locations where the sign toppers will be installed.** Identification signs are only installed on top of existing street name sign assemblies.

There are two options regarding the number of signs to be installed within the boundaries of the neighborhood.

- a. **Option 1:** Install Neighborhood Identification signs along the perimeter boundary or entrances to the neighborhood, only.
- b. **Option 2:** Install Neighborhood Identification signs at all intersections within the boundary of the neighborhood.

List all intersections using both street names (see example below) and attach a map with locations identified. Please note some intersections have two street signs.

SW corner of Main St. and 1 <sup>st</sup> St.	SW corner of Pearl St. and Main St.
NE corner of Main St. and 1 <sup>st</sup> St.	NE corner of Pearl St. and Main St.
Main and 3 <sup>rd</sup> St	Pearl St. and 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.
Main and 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	Pearl St. and 5 <sup>th</sup> St.
Main and 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	
Total 5	Total 4

Total: 9

**D. Specify the number of sign toppers requested:** include 2 – 3 additional replacement signs to be stored at the City of Carrollton in case sign toppers are damaged or stolen. (For example , if the total number of street signs in the geographical boundaries of your neighborhood is 9, and you want to place sign toppers on all of them,  $9 + 3 = 12$  (total number of signs to be ordered))

**Neighborhood Support: What percentage of your neighborhood is in support of this project?**

**Example:**

Total number of households in the neighborhood	100
Number of households notified about the project (Notified by a survey, email, flyer etc...)	90
Number of households indicating support (Provide survey results, emails, meeting minutes...)	60
Percentage of neighborhood support (households in support / total households x 100) $60/100 \times 100$	60%
How many households have not been informed about this project? (Vacant houses, out of town, no response...)	10
Percentage of uninformed households (uninformed households / total households x 100) $10/100 \times 100$	10%

**How did you involve your neighborhood in designing the sign?**

Please list activities implemented to solicit neighborhood input on the sign design i.e. list any meetings, surveys/polls conducted, posts to your web page, Nextdoor or Facebook, petitions signed, or newsletters, e-mails etc. utilized to gather resident input. Include any discussion of survey results, e-mails, meeting minutes or newsletters.

**How much is this going to cost?**

Use the Budget Worksheet to determine the cost of the project to your neighborhood. The total Cost of the Project must be determined. The neighborhood will pay 33.34% of the cost minus sweat equity and monetary donations.

Let us walk through an example:

### **Total Project Cost**

At this point, you will already be working with a sign company on the design and production of your signs. The total cost of your project will include sign costs, design fees, shipping and other misc. costs. The City of Carrollton will include brackets for the installation, so do not include in the quote.

### **EXAMPLE:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>\$ Amount</b>
Total number of signs requested	30
Price per sign	\$ 45
A. Cost of Materials (# of signs x price per sign) =	\$ 1,350
B. Misc. Costs (set up fee, delivery fee)	\$ 30
<b>C. Total Cost Estimate</b> (Enter this amount on page 4)	<b>\$ 1,380</b>

### **Neighborhood Match**

The only volunteer labor available for the sign topper grant is for completing the application. This includes volunteer hours for designing, counting/listing of signs needed, working with the sign company, and working with the NPO, writing the grant, and preparing the NAC presentation. Each task must be listed separately on the actual budget worksheet. The hourly rate for volunteer hours is \$15/per hour.

To calculate the value of sweat equity, *list* each task that will be performed by volunteer labor (such as application preparation and reporting time); the number of people participating; and the hours estimated to perform the task. Then, for each task, *multiply* the number of people performing the sweat equity; the total number of hours estimated to complete the task; and the rate of \$15 per hour. Finally, find the total sum of the "\$ Value of Sweat Equity" column. You will insert this total on page 4 of the application.

### **EXAMPLE:**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Number of People Participating</b>	<b>Number of Hours</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>\$ Value of Sweat Equity</b>
Initial meeting	5	1	\$15.00	\$ 75
Neighborhood survey	1	3	\$15.00	\$ 45
Design	3	2	\$15.00	\$ 90
Meet with NPO	2	1	\$15.00	\$ 30
Complete application	2	2	\$15.00	\$ 60
NAC presentation	2	2	\$15.00	\$ 60
<b>Total Value of Sweat Equity</b>				<b>360</b>

**Neighborhood Monetary Contribution**

Please provide the amount of sweat equity from above cash donations received for project: Cash donations can be from individuals, local companies or fundraising. The funds must be in the neighborhood account when the application is submitted.

**EXAMPLE:**

<b>Neighborhood Portion of Grant (1/3 of total project cost estimate (total cost x .3334))</b>	<b>\$ 460</b>
Subtract Total Value of Sweat Equity (above)	-\$ 360
Subtract Total Value of Upfront Cash Donations	-\$ 20
	\$
<b>Total neighborhood Monetary Contribution (Enter this amount in the table below) pg 4</b>	<b>\$ 80</b>

**D. FINAL BUDGET CALCULATION**

To complete your final project cost estimate, you will need to subtract the Neighborhood Monetary Contribution (1/3 of total project cost – sweat equity) from the calculated cost of the project as determined on page 4:

<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>\$ Amount</b>
Total Estimated Cost of Project (A)	\$ 1,380
Subtract Total Neighborhood Monetary Contribution (C)	- \$ 80
	\$
<b>Total Grant Requested (\$5,000.00 maximum)</b>	<b>\$ 1,300</b>

**Submitting the Application**

After ensuring that the project is eligible and the application is complete, submit the application to the Neighborhood Partnership Office. Applications are accepted on an on-going basis but are due three weeks before the next Neighborhood Advisory Commission meeting in order to be put on the agenda.

- Ensure the application form and budget worksheet complete
- Print the first page of the application, and obtain signatures from the Project Team Leaders. Scan the page and include it with all other required documents

- Ensure that your sign topper mock-up of the approved design is included with the application
- Save the application and attach it to an email to be sent to [community.development@cityofcarrollton.com](mailto:community.development@cityofcarrollton.com)
- If technical issues prevent emailing the required documents, supporting documents, they can be mailed to or dropped off at:

City of Carrollton  
 The Neighborhood Partnership Office  
 Community Development  
 1945 E. Jackson Rd.  
 Carrollton, TX 75006

- Please note: the application must be emailed to [community.development@cityofcarrollton.com](mailto:community.development@cityofcarrollton.com)

### **Staff Review**

After an application is submitted, City staff will review to ensure that all program requirements are met. Staff may request additional information or revisions to the proposal from the project coordinator. After having met all sign topper specifications, the proposal is approved for presentation to the NAC at their next scheduled meeting.

### **Neighborhood Presentation**

Neighborhoods are required to present proposals at an NAC meeting. This is done with a PowerPoint, flip charts or with handouts in 5-10 minutes. This will show the NAC all the preparation and the investment of the community in the project. The NAC approves the sign design only if it complies with all the requirements listed in the guidelines.

At this meeting, the NAC will vote on whether to approve the neighborhood proposal.

### **Implementation**

Neighborhood Partnership staff will monitor projects through completion, providing technical assistance as needed.

The Neighborhood Partnership Office staff will order the signs.

### **Agreements**

Following approval of a neighborhood grant application and prior to the commencement of any progress on the project, the neighborhood organization will be required to enter into a written agreement with the City (the “NEMGP Project Agreement”). The president of the neighborhood organization and the primary project coordinator must sign and notarize the NEMGP project agreement. This NEMGP project agreement will set forth the scope of work performed, the resources pledged by the neighborhood, the amount of the grant from the City and the date by which the project must be completed. In addition, the Neighborhood Association President and Assistant City Manager must sign and notarize a Maintenance and License agreement. This

agreement outlines the terms and conditions of the installation and maintenance of the Sign Toppers.

### **Installation Guidelines**

Public Works installs the signs for the neighborhood. Installation of the neighborhood identification signs will be completed within 90 working days after the City has received the signs.

### **DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS**

Final payment for a project will only be made once the project is complete. It is the neighborhood's responsibility to approve the project has been completed to expectations.

The neighborhood will pay any "cash match" identified in the application to the City after installation. Please note this may change depending on the final cost of the project. If the neighborhood owes any additional monies, the city will send a communication about final payment.

### **Project Close Out**

The President or a member of the current Board of Directors (BOD) of the neighborhood must sign a Release of All Claims. A release of all claims is a legal document that states that the project is completed to the BOD's expectations and is paid for by the City of Carrollton, the Board of Directors of the community absolves the City of Carrollton of all legal liability.