

Example 2023 Planning Grant Application- City Facility Habitat Improvements

****This is a fictional application that has been created by Nature in the City staff. The Cost estimates, Landscape designers and installers have been created as an example.****

Administrative Questions

1. What is the address of the proposed project?

(All projects must be within the City of Fort Collins Growth Management Area:

<https://www.fcgov.com/fortfund/pdf/growth-management-map.pdf>)

625 9th St, Fort Collins, CO 80524

2. Are you the owner of the property where you are planning a project? If not, do you have written permission from the property owner that you can complete this project?

I am not the owner. However, I have permission from the owner to do this habitat improvement project. The owner is part of the project team and will be involved in the project as it moves forward.

3. If selected for a grant, you will be required to sign a NIC project agreement similar to the one found in the "Background and Guide to Submitting a Proposal". After reviewing the document found on the NIC website, would you be able to agree to the terms of the agreement?

Yes

General Questions

4. Please list the key members of your project team and their roles. This should include individuals from within your organization, as well as collaborators from other organizations. *(Please note the project manager – who will serve as the main point of contact for communication)*

Project Manager – Kristy Bruce, City of Fort Collins

Landscape Designer – Natural Habitat Concepts INC

Landscaper, installation, and maintenance – Natural Habitat Creations INC

Property Owner – Larry Schneider, City of Fort Collins

5. In one to two paragraphs, please provide:
 - An overview of your proposed project,
 - Details about the elements of your idea, and
 - Where this proposed project would be located on your property.

Our department has expressed interest in converting some of the turfgrass to a native landscape to

attract bees, butterflies, and birds, and to reduce water use. This proposed project will be more interesting, provide native habitat, and support pollinators. The plan evolved to provide a place for children to play, and a trail connection to the nearby park.

Our concept plan has four elements. We plan on creating a soft surface trail that connects to local pathways so that employees and visitors can connect with sidewalks and have a place to enjoy the outdoors near the building. We will work with the designer to make sure this trail requires minimal maintenance and has a natural feel. We want to create a pollinator garden using native plants between the building and the parking lot so that we can see birds and butterflies from the windows and walking to and from the parking lot. This area will have a path to encourage exploration. The nature-play space will tie in with the native plant theme and provide an active area for kids. The final area will have native shrubs with edible fruit. This area will remove turf, save water, and provide food for birds and other small animals.

The trail will be located at the south end of the property and follow the landscaping along the entrance driveway. The pollinator garden and nature play area will be near the front door on the east side of the building. The native shrubs with edible fruit will be north of the parking lot.

6. Describe how your proposed project would support a diversity of *native* plants and animals.

Between the pollinator garden and the native fruiting shrub areas, there will be several different heights and types of native plants that will support different kinds of habitat and will look good year-round with different colors and blooming seasons.

7. Describe the audiences your proposed project would serve. How would your proposed project increase access to nature for the broader community and are there any limitations to access?

This project makes the space outside the office a more welcoming interesting place to be for employees, visitors, and their families. There are over 80 employees who would benefit daily, along with the many daily visitors. The office is very close to Sugar Beet Park, and we hope that with the soft-surface trail, local neighbors and people visiting the park will feel welcome to come and explore. There will be not limitations for public access.

8. Describe how your proposed project would motivate your audiences to take stewardship actions.

We hope that employees and visitors to this space will see more different kinds of animals and insects, and that they will enjoy the landscape as it changes throughout the year. It is likely that as people see the pollinators and native shrubs, they will see how beautiful and diverse native plants can be and may be inspired to create native habitats at their homes. Signs or programs held for staff might help explain how they can do the same. We also hope that the nature play area is a fun place that draws children to the site and encourages them to explore further, engaging their own sense of curiosity. We will ask our employees about how they would be most interested in engaging in the project during this planning phase to see if any of these ideas or a volunteer planting event might be of interest.

9. How will you engage your community during the planning phase to gather their input and build support for your proposed project?

We plan to have a series of lunch-and-learn events for staff along the way so they can provide input to help form the design and to provide feedback along the way. We also want to put a yard sign at Sugar Beet Park with a link to a survey to get input on what park-users think. This input will help us decide on some of the final design details.

10. Tell us about the challenges and barriers that you are most likely to encounter in the planning phase, implementation of the proposed project, and ongoing maintenance. Do you have preliminary ideas on how they'll be addressed?

During the planning phase, our main challenge will be securing a minor amendment from the City of Fort Collins. However, our consultant has been through this process before and will be able to lead us through it. The main hurdle during the implementation phase will likely be obtaining the specific native plants we want. We will be sure to reach out to a wholesale nursery early to reserve these plants. Finally, we anticipate our biggest challenge after installation to be training the landscape maintenance crew to manage native plants. To address this, we plan to send them to a training on native plant maintenance so they will have a better understanding about seasonal maintenance and weed management for native plants.

Funding Questions

11. What is the total cost of the planning phase for your project? How much are you requesting for a planning grant? *(limit \$5,500)*

The total cost is \$5,500 and we are requesting the full amount from the grant.

12. Is any portion of the grant going towards outreach or project management costs? If so, how much? *(Cost for these elements cannot exceed 15% of the grant request in total)*

We will bring refreshments to our lunch-and-learn staff discussions, but the cost will not exceed 15%.

13. Do you anticipate any additional financial or in-kind contributions for your planning phase and if so, what are they? *(Nature in the City does not require a specific match to our granting dollars)*

We will not be using the grant to cover the cost of staff time needed to manage the project and will provide that time as sweat equity.

14. Why does your project need financial assistance from the City?

This is a large project, and we would like to get the design for each part completed at the same time

rather than designing it in phases. We are gathering some funds for installation which will be ready next year. At this time, we do not have funds for the planning phase.

15. Do you have any initial thoughts on how you might fund the implementation of your project at a later phase? *(if so, please describe)*

We have applied for several state and local grants to fund installation of the project in 2024. The remaining cost will come from our budget. Adding this plan to our grant will give us a better chance of getting funded.

Attachments

Please upload a copy of your Planning Project Budget Worksheet, photos of your site and a concept plan of your project. A template for the budget worksheet can be downloaded below. The "download template" for the concept plan is an example and not a template.

1. Planning Project Budget Worksheet – please provide detail line item of all costs associated with the planning phase of this project. Use the template provided. **See example**
2. Site Photos – please provide photos of the current conditions of the implementation site
3. Concept Plan – please provide a site map with a conceptual sketch of your proposed project. This can be a first draft sketch of preliminary ideas - it does not need to be detailed and can change during the planning phase. **See example**