



SAULT STE. MARIE

Neighbours Helping Neighbours

Grant Application Overview

2024

Where you belong.

CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE

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Objectives

After a disruptive disaster such as a large tornado, it could take hours or days for first responders to arrive in your neighbourhood. Up to 80% of all help immediately following a disaster is provided by family, friends and neighbours. Research shows that people working together recover more quickly and are more emotionally resilient than people acting on their own.

Neighbours Helping Neighbours (NHN) is a grant designed to build social capital by bringing neighbours together in a variety of ways. NHN does not replace official disaster response, but these close relationships can be invaluable when something unexpected comes along. From needing to borrow a missing ingredient to having someone keep an eye on your home when you are on vacation, being surrounded by people you can trust can make a huge difference in your quality of life.

These kinds of relationships just don't happen and one has to create opportunities to connect with their neighbours and spend time getting to know each other. Sault Ste. Marie is offering grants of up to \$500 for neighbourhoods that host an event which will allow neighbours to connect and build resilience at a neighbourhood scale.

Projects for Increasing Resilience

Enhancing Emergency Preparedness

One of the most effective emergency preparedness activities is to connect with your neighbours because the first people to provide assistance in an emergency are often those nearby. Connected neighbourhoods respond and recover more quickly and effectively following a disaster. Some project ideas to get you started:

- Organize a neighbourhood garage sale, clothing swap, little library, shared pantry, plant/ seed or tool swap system.
- Host an [Emergency Preparedness Workshop](#) with a neighbourhood group.
- Schedule a neighbourhood walking tour and make a neighbourhood response plan.
- Become a [FireSmart Recognized Neighbourhood](#).
- Organize a child car seat inspection or bicycle tune up.
- Conduct a CPR or first aid training seminar.
- Host a block party or neighbourhood celebration (must be new and not previously established)



Climate Action

Taking climate action at a neighbourhood level can help good ideas spread – this is how the concept of blue boxes emerged a generation ago! Check out the [Community Energy Efficiency Incentives](#) page to learn about ways you can get involved to reduce our climate impact and prepare for a changing climate. Some project ideas to get you started:

- Organize a neighbourhood challenge to inspire your community members to reduce household greenhouse gas emissions.
<https://www.pocketchangeproject.ca/>
- Have a “green home” talk or tour of climate-friendly features in your neighbourhood (e.g. who has an e-bike, a heat pump, an electric vehicle, who knows how to do draft proofing etc).
- Share skills: Teach others how to craft or build something that meets the goals above. We all have something to offer!
 - Host a bike maintenance and repair workshop
 - Host a rain barrel installation workshop
- Reuse or share what’s already in your community: We have so many resources in our lives already that are available for sharing or rehoming.
 - Host a clothing swap

Caring for Nature

Small natural areas within neighbourhoods (such as trees, naturesscaped gardens and boulevards) can provide valuable nature spaces and corridors that improve connections between larger natural areas. Research has shown that spending just two hours over a week in nature improves our mental health.

- Create a [Naturescape](#) block or neighbourhood. Wildlife relies on native plant habitats that you can provide in your yard or even in pots on your deck.
- Create a pollinator corridor in your neighbourhood. Find out how you can provide plants that [attract and support our native butterflies \[PDF - 203 KB\] \[PDF - 203 KB\]](#). Find out how you can provide [habitat for native bees \[PDF - 322 KB\] \[PDF - 322 KB\]](#).
- Organize a neighbourhood session to build and install bird, bat, or bee boxes together. Here are some simple designs: [Nestbox for Swallows \[PDF - 41 KB\]](#) or [Chickadees and Nuthatches \[PDF - 100 KB\]](#). Also, check out this information about [protecting nestboxes from invasive birds \[PDF - 227 KB\]](#). Support bats by installing a [bat roosting box \[PDF - 3 MB\]](#).
- Spring/fall landscaping cleanup of neighbourhood park/area including graffiti removal and other neighbourhood beautification strategies.



Application Process

1. **Organize a team** - at least two applicants from different households are required on every application, one as the main applicant and the other as co-applicant
2. **Write and submit your application** - Applications will be accepted January through March. Submit completed applications online to fire@cityssm.on.ca, or by mail to Fire Services - 72 Tancred Street, SSM ON, P6A 2W1
3. **Wait for the results** - Once an application has been received by City staff it will be reviewed for eligibility and completeness. Applications will be reviewed throughout April and grants will be awarded during Emergency Preparedness Week (May 6, 2024) based on a first come first serve basis. Priority will be given to applications from neighbourhoods who are applying for the first time.
4. **Bring your idea to life** - Your grant will be sent to the Group Lead via cheque or direct deposit. Now it's time to get started! Project is to be accomplished and reported on within six months of grant award (or other reasonable timeline as agreed to by staff).
5. **Share your story** - Be sure to take a few photos and share them with us. This will inspire more people to get started in making their neighbourhoods stronger, safer and more welcoming.

Eligibility

What kind of projects are accepted by the Neighbours Helping Neighbours Grant?

- Project provides a resilience benefit to the neighbourhood, not only one household.
- Project accomplishes goals in at least two of the three areas of Emergency Preparedness, Climate Action and Caring for Nature.
- Any product, service, or event created with the support of a Neighbours Helping Neighbours Grant must be offered for free.
- Project can be delivered within the \$500 grant budget, or additional budget sources equal to the project needs are shown to be available.
- Project will obtain any required permits, including landowner approvals, before relevant activities take place.



What can I use the grant money for?

- You can ask for up to \$500 for any project. After your project is over, you have to return any unused or leftover grant money. You are responsible for keeping track of your expenses for all project costs, and for making sure your budget balances, but we are happy to help.
- You can use the grant to offset any expenses that were needed for the project. This includes products, transportation, or services.
- You may ask for up to \$100 to provide honorariums to anyone who contributes skills or knowledge to your project. For example, if you plan to host a bike workshop and bring in a guest teacher you may pay them the honorarium. You can also use the grant to purchase a premium subscription with a platform like Zoom to host more attendees virtually.
- Except for community gardens, projects involving infrastructure building or upgrading or purchasing of large equipment such as computers are not eligible.
- Projects must be free, accessible and welcoming to all. They may not charge entrance fees, request donations, or fundraise for other projects and/or organizations.
- Your projects must happen after the grant decision is made, not before. We cannot support projects that have already started or already happened.

Who can apply?

- Anyone living in Sault Ste. Marie can apply. Application must include participants from at least two separate households including the project group lead.
- Registered organizations and businesses are not eligible to apply. These grants are specifically for individuals and small volunteer-based neighbourhood or community groups.

What do I do if my project requires a permit or liability insurance to happen?

- If your project requires any permits, such as a city or park board permit, they must be acquired and approved prior to applying for the grant.
- Most projects will not require liability insurance, but bigger projects or events may need them. If you do, you must purchase it ahead of applying for the grant.

Still Have Questions?

- Reach out to us by email fire@cityssm.on.ca