



**KEEP
CINCINNATI
BEAUTIFUL**



The City of Cincinnati's Safe and Clean Neighborhood Fund

(Updated March 2026)

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Mt. Airy C.U.R.E and local volunteers prepping the community space in Mt. Airy's business district as part of their Safe and Clean Grant. The outdoor space will have an ADA path, family friendly seating, and a community garden.

Priority Focuses for May 2026 Cycle:

Safe and Clean funding is intended for projects based on crime prevention through environmental design where improved beautification enhances community ownership and reduces violence.

This funding is open for organizations prioritizing youth-led initiatives to promote positive physical changes in neighborhoods.



Priority Focuses for May 2026 cycle:

- **Engage Youth Leaders:** Projects should be led by or actively involve young people who are passionate about improving their neighborhoods.
- **Promote Physical Changes:** Focus on transforming the physical environment, whether it's through litter pick-up, renovations to shared spaces, or creative enhancements to buildings in their area.
- **Implement Crime Prevention Principles:** Utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies to reduce crime and increase community safety.
- **Enhance Community Ownership:** Initiatives should aim to beautify public spaces, fostering a sense of pride and ownership among residents.



Priority Focuses for May 2026 cycle:

- **Engage Youth Leaders:** Projects should be led by or actively involve young people who are passionate about improving their neighborhoods.
- What decisions are youth making in relation to project?
- Note- Think about what specific decisions youth will make in the formation of your project. Think about how youth will be included in the scanning and analysis of the project, not just the response,
- What factors will drive your decision on youth selected to participate?

The goals of the Safe and Clean Fund are:

- To support and encourage youth-led, community-based, and community-initiated projects (**collaboration** with other communities/organizations **strongly encouraged**)
- To support projects that harness the power of young people to create lasting, positive physical changes in their communities.
- To provide financial support for one-time costs (**not ongoing operating expenses**) for neighborhood-led initiatives to improve the quality of life within the City's neighborhoods.



Volunteers came together to help Mt. Airy C.U.R.E remove litter and invasive plants at Mt. Airy's business district.



Powerful Pollinators(B the Keeper, Groundworks ORV, Civic Garden Center, and Sprout) planted pollinators, created a walkway, and mulched the beds. This event marked the third event funded by their Safe and Clean grant of \$5,100, with an average of 20 youths participating engaged in service on each field day.

The Safe and Clean Neighborhood Fund was:

- Established in 2003 by the City of Cincinnati
- Keep Cincinnati Beautiful has been grant administrator since 2007
- \$524,177.50 to distribute in FY 2025-2026
- \$214,740.50 remains for FY25-26.
- 3 Grant Cycles per year
- **Deadlines are 2nd Friday of January, May and September(October 2025) each year**



Safe and Clean Grant Eligibility:

- Project must serve one or more of Cincinnati's 52 Neighborhoods
- Priority focus for organizations serving the Top 10 Neighborhoods 2025 with the highest gun statistical violence(by incident): **Winton Hills, Over-the-Rhine, West End, Walnut Hills, Avondale, Central Business District, Westwood, West Price Hill, Roselawn, East Price Hill.**
- Organizations applying must be in operation for at least 6 months before applying
- Project \$ amount requested must be over \$1,000
- Priority focus for organizations that are grassroots and operating budget less than \$1 Million
- Have met with grant coordinator to discuss project idea and scope of services.
- Be able to provide a completed W9 if awarded for funding.
- Have letters of support, MOU's, and signed fiscal sponsorship agreement

[Link to full guidelines here](#)



While it's no longer required, projects requesting funds can show evidence of matching funds from the community. This can take the form of volunteer labor, donated materials or professional services, and/or cash.

- Fillable budget worksheet is required for application and can be downloaded from our [website](#) (required to be eligible for funding)
- Glossary with explained terms of matches and benefit tracking is on our [website](#)
- Partial funding is optional.
- Volunteer rate per hour is \$33.49
- Minimum grant award of \$1000 with no maximum award, anything \$30k+ is a bigger ask.
- Average granted amount per project funded in FY24-25: \$24,305.00



Price Hill Safety CAT will pay youth to operate lawn mowing tools to beautify vacant lots in Price Hill. Youth will be matched with mentors for training and supervision to include problem solving and budgeting their earnings

EXPENSES

Ineligible Expenses:

- Entertainment
- T shirts / Accessories
- Personnel Costs*:
- Ongoing payroll
- Utility bills: Gas, Electric, Wi-Fi/Internet/Cable
- Rent

Note: that Contractor fees & Service fees are allowed examples: Nature artist, guest speaker, & electrician

- **Youth Stipends are mandatory at a minimum of \$15 per hour.**
- **Transportation reimbursement is eligible within City limits.**
- **Food and Beverages are allowable, grantee will submit a written food/beverage request.**

[Link to budget worksheet](#)

EXPENSES

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- **Youth Stipends are mandatory at a minimum of \$15 per hour.**
- **Transportation reimbursement is eligible within City limits.**

Food and Beverages are allowable, grantee will submit a written food/beverage request with:

- Time and place of the meeting/event
- Purpose of meeting/event
- Projected number of attendees
- Short description of food and beverages & projected costs
- And why it should be provided in the circumstances.
- Post event, grantee will report the number of attendees and reimbursement with prior approval.

[Link to budget workseet](#)



This is a **reimbursable grant** meaning all expenses, services, materials, & related costs must be paid before submitting for reimbursement.

- There are no limits on the number of claim vouchers you submit, you can submit for reimbursement each month, by project area up to completion, or at the end of the project.
- Note- Stipends/Payment to contractors/services are eligible for reimbursement. Ex: Gun Safety Expert for Gun Violence Prevention Programming.
- **Youth stipends are eligible for reimbursement.**



Save Our Youth Kings and Queens provides after school programming, mentoring, enrichment field trips and stewardship opportunities for youth in the Winton Terrace/Winton Hills community.

- Safe and Clean Grant Term: 1 year term if approved for funding
 - If the agreement was signed on 6/1/2024 then you'd have until 6/1/2025 make all the purchases necessary for the project that would be eligible for reimbursements.
- Midway report is due no later than 6 months after signing agreement with photos/multimedia
- Final report is due no later than 30 days after your term ends with photos/multimedia
- Failure to submit both reports will disqualify you from receiving funding until both reports are submitted.

Please note: if you have an open grant with S&C, final report must be turned in to be eligible for the next deadline. You can not have more than one open grant.



Youth member of Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati at Rees E. Price Elementary weeding and installing new flower beds



SARA MODEL

S.A.R.A Model:
Objective
What do you to achieve?

Scanning: Identify & Describe the problem using basic data, knowledge and maps
"What is the problem you are trying to solve?"

Analysis: Using the data and information technology above, dig deeper into the problems and underlying causes.
"Why does the problem exist?"

Response: What are planning to do to solve the problem? Devising a solution and working with and as a community.
"What specific actions will you take?"

Assessment: What are the measurable outcomes of this project?
What 2-3 outcomes can we expect from this project?
"How will you measure success?"

Measurable Outcomes



Keep Cincinnati Beautiful's Education and Youth Programming Team with Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati and Fidelity at South Avondale Elementary

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati's measurable outcomes:

1. Host two 2024 summer clean-up volunteer opportunities (40-50 BGCGC teens participating in two 3-hour events).
2. Teens work alongside community volunteers (Fidelity and KCB) in Avondale and Price Hill neighborhoods that experience litter, over growth and invasives.
3. Long-term, these activities will continue to build safety, as at least 75% of summer campers continue as year-round Club members.
4. Additionally, BGCGC teens will visit clean-ups sites monthly year-round, further building community pride.

Measurable Outcomes Cont.

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati's May 2024 Grant: \$9,167

- Host two 2024 summer clean-up volunteer opportunities (40-50 BGCGC teens participating in two 3-hour events). Teens work alongside community volunteers (Fidelity and KCB) in Avondale and Price Hill – neighborhoods that experience litter, over growth and invasives.
- Long-term, these activities will continue to build safety, as at least 75% of summer campers continue as year-round Club members. Additionally, BGCGC teens will visit clean-ups sites monthly year-round, further building community pride.

Feedback:

- Great use of SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Based
- Set a goal for year round monthly clean ups, "we aim to complete 12 monthly clean ups for 2 hours each visit with 6 bags of trash collected each visit for the next 12 months."

Price Hill Safety CAT \$2,832.56

- In 11 weeks, 5 mentors and 11 youths removed 261 large bags of trash totaling 6,525 lbs from vacant lots and surrounding areas.
- Partnered with KCB's Education & Youth team at Rees E. Price Elementary to prep garden space
- Partnered with Price Hill Will at St. Lawrence Square in May of 2025.





- Youth received stipends and learned how to budget their earnings.
- 4 students opened bank accounts.
- 1 youth started his own landscaping company saving his earnings from the summer program.
- Youth learned landscaping skills and team building. The youth received mentoring and school supplies.
- All 11 youth are planning to return for the summer of 2025.

Mt. Airy CURE \$21,000

- Engaged Aiken High School's agriculture program students and staff(33 volunteers for 3 hours)= 99 hours
- Hosted 2 clean up events with community members, Aiken HS, and Duke Energy
- Installed 6 raised beds and a pumpkin patch
- 6 picnic tables were built
- Invasive removal
- Added improved lighting to commons
- Improved the ADA pathway
- This project activated an unused dumping site engaging 69 volunteers for 228 hours.

Madisonville Mission Ministries' Flash Point Project

Provide minor home repairs and updates to low-moderate income residents in Madisonville/Kennedy Heights, Madisonville Mission Ministries collaborated with Mentoring Young Men Ministry to complete the projects.

- With 13 young men from the communities, they were able to complete 7 household repairs and updates totaling 507 hours of volunteer sessions.
- Each youth participant was able to receive a stipend for their time (13 stipends).
- “The impact of this program has made noticeable changes in our community. Because of our efforts, some property owners took action on their own to remove trash that was present.”
- “Property owners are offering us to help with these efforts to ensure property owners are taking care of their properties.”



Madisonville Mission Ministries received \$15,225 for Safe and Clean Funds including paying for youth stipends.

Save Our Youth Kings and Queens \$30,000

- In January 2025, Save Our Youth Kings and Queens was granted funding for beautification in Winton Hills led by youth.
- "Youth are the primary drivers of the project. In addition to providing stipends for labor, we are inviting youth to decide which spaces are targeted, what types of beautification the sites will receive, and what the creative design might be." - Save Our Youth Kings and Queens.



Save Our Youth Kings and Queens cont.

Measurable outcome goals:

- Aim to engage 15 youths in service to clean areas in their neighborhoods with trash, and debris, and adding visual elements such as flowers.
- Aim to revitalize 10 major sites through liter pick up and landscaping.



Tips when writing your application:

- Imagine your application is being read for the first time. Does it make sense? Are all the logistical pieces in place(examples: location of project, transportation)? I may have read your proposal, but the committee has not.
- Cite your references/data
- K.I.S.S- Keep It Short and Sweet, sometimes less is better(not to say to leave out important details but less narrative and straight to the point).
- If your project includes other city departments, please make sure you've received the information needed from the department before applying. ex. invoice/bid from DOTE, DPS, etc. Please inform Ty if your project includes another department before submitting your proposal.
- When measuring assessment and outcomes think of S.M.A.R.T
 - Is it specific?
 - Is it measurable? Can this goal be used as a metric/number/data?
 - Is it achievable?
 - Is it relevant to Safe and Clean's focus and the mission of Safe and Clean?
 - Is this goal time-based within the year term limit?



How are Safe and Clean applications reviewed?

Keep Cincinnati Beautiful will convene a six-member Fund Advisory Committee to review grant applications and make recommendations for funding. Composition of the Fund Advisory Committee will be as follows:

- One representative from Keep Cincinnati Beautiful; this representative will also serve as the Fund Advisory Committee's convener(**NON-VOTING**)
- One representative from Community Development and Planning
- One representative from the Police Department
- One representative from the City Manager's office (ex officio member)
- One representative from Public Services
- One member from the private sector (representing a broad cross-section of the community) selected by Keep Cincinnati Beautiful

In the case of resignation or removal of a representative, Keep Cincinnati Beautiful will replace the representative in time to participate in the upcoming round of application reviews and recommendations.

Next steps to apply for Safe and Clean Funding:

- Review full guidelines [here](#).
- Reach out to Ty to discuss your project/program proposal at Ty@Keepcincinnatibeautiful.org - you must meet with Ty to be eligible for funding.
 - Please note attending/watching the virtual informational session(s) does not qualify for a meeting.
- Applications open 30 days prior to deadline via Submittable([link](#) will be on the website)
- We will notify you on your application status no later than 60 days after the deadline via email used with Submittable account.
- Application Feedback is offered to applicants regardless if accepted for funding or declined at this time.



Honorable Virginia Tallent presenting community award to Safe and Clean grantees, Price Hill Safety CAT, at Keep Cincinnati Beautiful's 2025 Love Thy 'Nati Awards.



Grant Application Writing Resources:

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have questions, need further assistance or accommodations. I am willing to review your drafted proposal and give feedback before submission deadlines. Please send feedback/application review requests no later than 5 days before the application deadline. Please send questions to Ty Wesselkamper:

ty@keepcincinnatibeautiful.org

- [UC Grant writing](#) - online classes via ED2go
- [Cincinnati State](#) also offers online courses via ED2go
- [Cincinnati Public Library: Free Resources/Classes/Workshops](#)
- [Greater Cincinnati Foundation: Resources, Data, Capacity Building guides](#)
- [-Grammarly](#) - [Free AI](#) proofreading application
- - LinkedIn Grant Writing Webinars
- [City of Cincinnati- OPDA\(office of performance and data analytics\)](#) - [Free](#) for public, Cincy Insights is also a good tool via ODPa.
- [University of Cincinnati Grant Writing Resources](#)- Ebooks, Web Resources
- [Grants Plus Resources](#): They also offer services for non-profits, webinars, articles, etc.



SAFE & CLEAN APPLICATION DEADLINES

Timeline	Important Dates
Applications go live	30 days before deadline
Initial meeting with coordinator to discuss project(required)	10 days before deadline
Request for feedback	7 days before deadline
Safe and Clean Grant Application Deadline	Monday October 27th, 2025, EOD 2nd Friday in January 2nd Friday in May- May 8th
Grant Award Notification	Within 60 days of application deadline
Midway Report	Halfway through project completion or within 6 months of award
Final Report	Due at the end of project completion

QUESTIONS?

Please note it is required to meet with Safe and Clean Grant Coordinator to be eligible for funding.

To learn more about Safe and Clean Funding please visit [our website here](#)

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