



## Cubs Charities Diamond Project

### 2016 Request for Proposals

A thriving community is a healthy community – one which offers youth the chance to play, supports the civic spirit of sportsmanship and embraces elders as coaches, mentors and allies. Local athletic fields make it happen.

The goal of the Cubs Charities Diamond Project is to expand opportunities for children to play baseball, create or preserve green space in underserved neighborhoods and to foster a love of baseball. Through the Diamond Project, Cubs Charities provides funds to non-profit, neighborhood-based organizations to support capital improvement projects that improve the quality, safety and accessibility of local baseball fields or indoor training facilities with the technical assistance of Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago.

Cubs Charities Diamond Project resources fall into the following categories:

- *Field Surface Grants:* to help finance the resurfacing of baseball fields.
- *Indoor Training Amenities Grants:* to equip gymnasiums or facilities with amenities that will allow for indoor play and baseball skills training during the off-season.
- *General Field/Stadium Support Grants:* for capital projects not associated with the actual field.
- *Electronic Scoreboards:* Daktronics outdoor LED baseball/softball scoreboards (6'H x 16'W x 8"D) and control system.

Applicants may request grants ranging from \$5,000-\$150,000 from the Cubs Charities Diamond Project and be used for capital improvements and scoreboard installation, only.

Organizations eligible to apply for a Cubs Charities Diamond Project grant include non-profit organizations registered as exempt from Federal Income Tax under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501c3, elementary, middle or high schools. **Preference is given to organizations within the City of Chicago.**

Applicants must demonstrate the proposed project will expand opportunities for children to play baseball. Strong preference will be given to those proposals which (1) seek to upgrade existing fields or indoor facilities in poor condition or otherwise underutilized; (2) demonstrate active use of the fields; (3) demonstrate community support and commitment to use the field after improvements; (4) attract matching funding; (5) involve local partnerships with non-profit community partners to promote youth safety and community programming on the fields; and, (6) provide for continuing maintenance and field safety.

**Proposals must be received by 5:00 PM Central Time on Friday, June 3, 2016**

**\*\*\*Note: As a courtesy, LISC will provide feedback on proposals submitted by noon on Friday, May 27, 2016**

**An informational session will be held at Wrigley Field in the Audi Club on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.**

**RSVP to [diamondproject@cubs.com](mailto:diamondproject@cubs.com) if you wish to attend.**

**Please read the complete RFP before submitting a proposal.**

**Proposals MUST BE MAILED. E-mails will not be accepted.**

### **Cubs Charities Diamond Project Objectives**

Athletic fields can serve as tremendous community assets by offering opportunities for recreation, education and relaxation, which contribute to the local quality of life. The Cubs Charities Diamond Project seeks to address the shortage of clean, safe and accessible baseball fields in low and moderate-income neighborhoods and, in turn, expand opportunities for children to play baseball and foster a love of the game.

Non-profit neighborhood-based organizations can play a leading role in the improvement of existing or creation of new athletic playing fields. With experience in both real estate development and community building, many of these organizations possess the capacity to address both the capital aspects of playing fields development and the program elements (i.e. youth baseball leagues, sports tournaments, summer festivals, community celebrations, and after-school events). Equally important to this experience, neighborhood-based organizations have connections to their community which legitimize their operations and draw resident support for their work. If local residents have a sense of ownership and see themselves as stakeholders in the creation and maintenance of playing fields, these community assets are more likely to be protected and preserved for long-term use.

The Cubs Charities Diamond Project is intended not only to respond to the immediate shortage of playing fields, but also to build an infrastructure through partnerships and resident involvement which will sustain these open spaces for community use.

### **Availability of Funding and Scoreboards**

- *Field Surface Grants:* grants ranging from \$50,000-\$150,000 are available to applicants seeking to resurface a grass baseball field or install new synthetic or sports turf surfaces on a community, middle school or high school baseball field.
- *Indoor Training Amenities:* grants ranging from \$5,000-\$150,000 to equip gymnasiums and other facilities with amenities that will allow for indoor play and baseball skills training year-round including batting cages, pitching machines, motorized winch systems, etc.
- *General Field/Stadium Support:* applicants may submit requests of up to \$150,000 for capital projects not associated with the actual field surface. This support includes the installation or refurbishment of bleachers, concession stands, lights, fencing, irrigation systems, etc.
- *Electronic Scoreboards:* grants up to \$10,000 to receive a Daktronics, standard outdoor LED baseball/softball scoreboards (6'H x 16'W x 8"D) and control system and to support the cost of installation. Applicants awarded a scoreboard will be responsible for installation.

Funds from the Cubs Charities Diamond Project may not be used to maintain baseball fields, as all grant funds must be used for capital expenditures including the physical development of the field and its surrounding amenities. Such projects may include, but are not limited to, new or renovated irrigation systems, topsoil, sod or seeding, lights, bleachers, public address systems, fences, restroom or locker room facilities, scoreboards, batting cages, motorized winches, scoreboard installation, etc.

### **Organizational Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for the Cubs Charities Diamond Project, organizations applying for grant funds must meet **all** of the criteria listed below:

- Be a community-based organization, elementary, middle or high school serving a neighborhood consisting primarily of low and moderate-income families and individuals in Chicago. Please note, schools must demonstrate accessibility of the field by the community;
- Have at least one full-time staff person (all-volunteer organizations will not be considered);
- Be in existence for at least three years;
- Have a proven track record in real estate development and/or recreational programming;
- Have partners or experience with sports-based youth development; and,
- Have 501c3 tax-exempt status.

Public agencies (other than public schools) may not apply for grants from the Cubs Charities Diamond Project. However, community-based non-profit organizations with 501c3 designation, elementary, middle and high schools meeting all other organizational criteria and private schools with 501c3 designation may apply to make improvements on fields owned and managed by public sector entities (e.g. City, Park District, etc.).

In those cases, the applicant must show evidence (1) the public entity supports the proposal and has reviewed proposed renovations and budget projections; (2) the public entity authorizes the applicant to carry out the proposed capital improvements (this authorization must take into account relevant labor/union regulations and liability issues); (3) the public entity demonstrates its financial commitment to field maintenance; and, (4) the field is open to and used by the community for organized athletics and other events.

### **Application Procedures**

To apply for funding under Cubs Charities Diamond Project, please submit an **original plus one (1)** copy of each of the following:

*Cover Sheet:* A one-page cover sheet including the following information:

- Name, address, e-mail address, telephone number of the organization
- Executive director and contact person (if different) for this application
- Brief description of proposed project
- Amount of funding requested

*Narrative:* In no more than five (5) typed pages, address the following:

- *Description of the organization:* mission, history, and accomplishments, with a focus on capacity to develop the proposed project.
- *Description of the neighborhood:* boundaries of the catchment area, income levels and ethnicity of the population served, condition of housing stock and main commercial areas, existence and conditions of local parks and open spaces (including community facilities). Include a description and commitment for on-going involvement and use of the field after the project is complete.
- *Description of the project:* location, current condition, plans for site/facility use, progress on this plan (including status on site control, zoning, environmental review, and physical improvements), project budget and match funding (if applicable), project/construction timeline.

- *Description of community engagement and access:* proof of community support for project and usage agreements with partner organizations if applicable.
- *Impact of the project and future sustainability:* planned or anticipated programming of field/facility space including youth and high school baseball programs, description and/or data on expanded youth engagement in baseball as a result of project, plans for continued maintenance and safety of field/facility (including long-term maintenance budget and timeline), and how project fits into community plans for neighborhood.
- *Recognition:* indicate how the Cubs Charities Diamond Project would be recognized for their contribution to the proposed project (signage, etc.) and your willingness to allow use of the completed field/facility by Cubs Charities for events including baseball/softball games, tournaments or sports/fitness-related events (e.g., Cubs on the Move Fitness Program).
- *Please indicate how you learned about the Cubs Charities Diamond Project.*

*Organizational Attachments:* Please attach the following items:

- IRS 501c3 determination letter
- Two most recent audited financial statements (preferably annual statements for 2014 and 2015)
- Most recent IRS 990 form (preferably 2015)
- Current List of organizations' Board of Directors (contact information)
- IRS W-9 Form

*Project Attachments:* Please include a copy of the following items:

- Budget, including all sources (pending and committed) and uses, for the proposed project
- Project/construction timeline
- Commitment letters from match funding sources (if applicable)
- Agreements and budgets for field programming (i.e. youth baseball)
- Submission of quotes or bids for proposed work
- Letters of support from field users and other community organizations
- Detailed plan from organizations responsible for field or amenity maintenance
- Landscaping or park design plans (if applicable)
- Environmental reports (if applicable and/or necessary)
- All proposed uses of field, if use will include more than baseball/softball

Please submit an original plus one (1) copy of the completed application, including the relevant attachments to the address below.

**Proposals MUST BE MAILED. E-mails will not be accepted.**

### **Selection Criteria**

Organizations and their projects will be selected for funding based upon the following criteria:

- 1. Feasibility of the proposed project.** The project budget must be based upon realistic costs, preferably with written contractor's estimates.
- 2. Project readiness.** Sources of funding for the entire budget should be identified. Plans for field renovation or facility renovation/upgrades should take into account the schedule of recreation

activities over the course of the year. A project/construction timeline should be specified in the proposal.

- 3. Impact upon neighborhood and support from the community.** Only proposals that locate projects in low and moderate-income communities will be considered. The proposal should clearly state how the field improvements would benefit the community. Clearly detail how many youth and adults make use of the field for baseball and for other activities now before renovations and a *projected* increase in the number of people that will use the field/facility as a result of the Cubs Charities Diamond Project improvements. Support letters from other neighborhood and partner organizations must be included.
- 4. Future field maintenance and safety.** Proposals must have written commitments of maintenance funding for a minimum of five years and a detailed five-year maintenance plan in order to demonstrate that the applicant will maintain the field despite projected wear and tear and potential overuse by youth sports participants. As a reminder, Cubs Charities Diamond Project funds may not be used to maintain field surfaces, as all grant funds must be used for capital expenditures.
- 5. Capacity of organization and its partners to carry out project.** The applicant organization must demonstrate, through its current management team and previous experience, the ability to manage the size and nature of the proposed project and a commitment and ability to operate the facility and ensure its continued use towards the goals of Cubs Charities after the project is completed.

Attn: Ashleigh Wayland  
*Cubs Charities Diamond Project*  
LISC Chicago  
135 S. LaSalle, #2230  
Chicago, IL 60603

**Proposals must be received by 5:00 PM Central Time on Friday, June 3, 2016**

***\*Note: As a courtesy, LISC will provide feedback on proposals submitted by noon on Friday, May 27, 2016***  
**Draft proposals may be submitted via email to [awayland@lisc.org](mailto:awayland@lisc.org).**

If you have questions regarding this RFP, please contact Ashleigh Wayland at LISC Chicago at 312-422-9568 or by e-mail at [awayland@lisc.org](mailto:awayland@lisc.org).