

WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD ACCELERATOR? Like all accelerators, FORT-ify supports growth-driven, organizations through **education, mentorship and financing**, but unlike most accelerators FORT-ify is designed to provide the accelerator experience for Neighborhood Associations and their leaders. Neighborhoods will participate in the accelerator for a fixed period of time, and as a cohort of neighborhood associations. The accelerator experience is a process of intense, rapid, immersive, and experiential education aimed at accelerating the progress of neighborhood associations – compressing years’ worth of learning into just a few months.

HOW WILL MY NEIGHBORHOOD BENEFIT FROM PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM?

Each Neighborhood Association enrolled from the 2024 Forti-fy cohort will...

- Obtain printed and digital copies of the Quick Action Plan they create with City staff.
- Obtain a new association logo.
- Be funded to host an end of program block party/ community engagement session for their neighborhood in July or August.
- Be eligible for \$5,500+ in funding to implement a project from their QAP.
- Have access to 1:1 coaching with city staff for 12 months.
- Have the opportunity to build relationships with other local neighborhood associations.

WHAT ARE THE PROGRAM COSTS & REQUIREMENTS?

- **FEES:** None! FORT-ify is offered free of charge to registered neighborhood associations located within the City of Fort Wayne.
- **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:** Applicants must submit an online or type-written application by 11:59 pm EST, January 31st.
 - Online applications can be submitted in the following location:
<https://form.jotform.com/233104487324048>
 - Application questions can be reviewed by downloading the application PDF.
 - Completed PDF applications can be emailed to rena.bradley@cityoffortwayne.org.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD REPRESENTATIVE LIST:** One component of the application includes listing 3-5 residents/stakeholders who agree to attend Fort-ify workshops. Ideally each representative will attend 100% of the workshops and activities. However, the NPAW staff understands that circumstance may arise that impact attendance. In the event that a representative cannot attend a workshop each association should consider a backup representative who could act as a substitute attendee as necessary.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS?

- **ATTENDANCE:** Each association must have at least three (3) representatives of their neighborhood present at all learning sessions as well as the end of program block-party. Two (2) or more representatives should be present during activities and coaching sessions.
- **PARTICIPATION:** In addition to attending, each program participant is expected to actively engage during workshops and activities, and with workshop facilitators, coordinators, other participants, volunteers, etc. Fort-ify offers basic tools, information, access to funding, and coaching. It is ultimately the role of each association to gain as much as possible from the program and put those lessons into practice.

DELIVERABLES: In addition to actively engaging, each neighborhood association will be expected to organize and host a block party/ community engagement session in August.

HOW MANY ASSOCIATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM THIS YEAR?

The 2024 cohort will have a maximum of four (4) neighborhood associations participants (including 12-20 individuals). Neighborhoods must be located within the city limits of the City of Fort Wayne: <https://www.cityoffortwayne.org/resources-neighborhoodsfw/maps-neighborhoodsfw.html>.

Up to five representatives of each association can be part of the neighborhood's application. One of the participants must be the association's acting president or vice-president and at least three participants must be neighborhood residents.

HOW MANY ASSOCIATIONS CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE GRANT DOLLARS?

Associations that complete the accelerator and their Quick Action Plan (QAP) will be eligible to apply for \$5,500+ in funding to implement a project from their neighborhood's QAP. Details about the application process will be shared with eligible applicants once those requirements have been met.

WHEN WILL ACCEPTED ASSOCIATIONS BE NOTIFIED?

City staff will notify applicants via email...

- within two (2) business days that their application has been received, and
- by 5:00 pm EST, February 29th if they have been accepted into our 2024 cohort.

WHAT IS A QUICK ACTION PLAN?

Unlike long-range neighborhood plans that take up to 18 months to complete and required approval of various City departments, Quick Action Plans are documents adopted only by the neighborhood association to record their goals and priorities for the next five (5) years.

HOW WILL MY NEIGHBORHOOD'S APPLICATION BE EVALUATED?

Projects must be reviewed and evaluated by City of Fort Wayne staff members. Using the rubric below, staff members will score each application on a scale of up to fifty (50) points. The City retains sole discretion in determining how proposed projects, programs, and activities meet the program guidelines and criteria.

- **Completeness** – Maximum score of 6 points
- **Relevance** - Maximum score of 7 points
- **Team skills and background**- Maximum score of 7 points
- **Perceived need of assistance** (high or low) - Maximum score of 15 points
- **Potential benefit** from programming offered/ How aligned interested are with workshop topics - Maximum score of 15 points

WHAT ARE THE TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES THAT WILL BE COVERED?

Below is a list of Workshops & Activities that will take place each month.

- **April**
 - Workshop: Community Listening/ Asset-Based Community Development
 - Activity: Plan Listening Events
 - Assignment: Determine block party & coaching dates; Submit bios & headshots
- **May**
 - Workshop: Governance & Succession
 - Activity: Community Listening Activity
 - Assignment: Legal structure and bylaw review; Complete secession, target market & recruitment plans
- **June**
 - Workshop: Civic Engagement
 - Activity: Update Association Docs & Infrastructure
 - Assignment: Draft mission and vision statements; Determine barriers & gaps
- **July**
 - Workshop: Fundraising & Grant Writing
 - Activity: Signature Gathering + Promotion (for community engagement event)
 - Assignment:
- **August**
 - Event: Host Block Party
 - Workshop/ Activity: Brainstorm & Draft grant applications
 - Assignment: Speaker & Fundraising Schedule
- **September**
 - Event: Celebration/ Graduation
 - Activity: Celebration Day/ Presidents Meeting Presentation
 - Assignment: Prepare for final presentation, Review grant application
- **October**:
 - Activity: Submit funding application

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT WITH ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

