

2026 Neighborhood Mini-Grant Recipient Guide

Hillsborough County Florida

Table of Contents

I: Mini-Grant Recipient Introduction 3

II: Recipient Timeline 3

Recipient Key Dates 3

Timeline Considerations 3

I. Permitting 3

II. Vendor Quotes 4

III. Volunteer/Project Team 4

III: Letter of Understanding 4

Spending Authorization for Mini-Grant Recipients 5

IV: Budget Procedures 5

Purchases by Hillsborough County 5

Reimbursements 7

Budget Modification Requests 9

V. Reporting Requirements 10

Mid-Term Report 10

Final Report 11

Section I: Mini-Grant Recipient Introduction

Congratulations on being awarded a 2026 Mini-Grant! We're excited to see the positive impact your neighborhood project will bring to your community through the Hillsborough County Neighborhood Mini-Grant Program.

Now, let's bring your vision to life. This guide is your go-to resource for managing your Mini-Grant project from start to finish. It walks you through each step of the process, providing essential tools, practical tips, and detailed instructions to help you stay on track, meet deadlines, and manage your budget with confidence.

If you have any questions about purchases, reimbursements, or budget modifications for your project, contact your Neighborhood Relations Team at **Neighborhood-Relations@HCFL.gov** or (813) 272-5860.

We're here to support you every step of the way - let's get started!

Section II: Recipient Timeline

The key dates listed below provide a helpful timeline when implementing your project – from the Letter of Understanding to mid-term reports, and, of course, the project completion deadline.

Recipient Key Dates

- Signed Letter of Understanding and Prohibition Against Economic Incentives for Foreign Entities Affidavit Deadline: **Friday, February 6, 2026, by 5 p.m.**
- Mid-Term Report Due Date: **Wednesday, April 1, 2026, by 5 p.m.**
- Budget Modification Deadline: **Wednesday, June 17, 2026, by 5 p.m.**
- Purchasing Deadline: **Friday, June 26, 2026, by 5 p.m.**
- Reimbursement Deadline: **Friday, July 17, 2026, by 5 p.m.**
- Final Report Due Date: **Friday, July 31, 2026, by 5 p.m.**
- Project Deadline: **Friday, July 31, 2026, by 5 p.m.**

***NOTE**: Failure to meet any requirements outlined in the 2026 Neighborhood Mini-Grant Recipient Guide will result in a two-year suspension of eligibility for subsequent Mini-Grant funding.*

Timeline Considerations

I. Permitting

If your project requires a permit, contact the permitting office for your city or county. Don't wait! The permitting process may take longer than expected. The neighborhood association is responsible for

Hillsborough County Permitting

- To learn more about Hillsborough County Permitting as it may relate to your project, call (813) 272-5600 or visit **Hillsborough County Development Services Department.** If applicable, complete a pre-submittal meeting request packet and email it to **Neighborhood-Relations@HCFL.gov**.
- **Signs and Message Boards in Unincorporated Hillsborough County:** If your project includes a sign or message board, contact Hillsborough County at 813-272-5600 (select Option 1, then Option 3) to obtain the current sign requirements. For additional assistance with sign-related questions, reach out to Fred (Sam) Ball at 813-307-1876 or via email at **BallF@HCFL.gov**.

Municipality Permitting Contacts

- **City of Tampa Permitting** – (813) 274-3100 (Option 1), Client Facilitator email: **CSDHelp@tampagov.net**, or visit **City of Tampa Permit Contacts** **City of Temple Terrace Permitting** – (813) 506-6460 Candace Willoughby, Permit Coordinator email: **permitapplication@templeterrace.gov** or visit **City of Temple Terrace Permitting Services**
- **City of Plant City Permitting** – (813) 659-4254, (Option 3), Wayne Fernandez, Building Official, email: **wfernandez@plantcitygov.com**, or visit the **City of Plant City Building Division**

II. Vendor Quotes

We recommend you confirm pricing and establish timelines for delivery and installation with all vendors. All aspects of your project—including events and installed items—must be fully completed by the Mini-Grant deadline of **Friday, July 31, 2026, by 5 p.m**. It is the neighborhood organization's responsibility to ensure that the selected vendor(s) can meet the deadline.

III. Volunteer/Project Team

It's important that you schedule project team meetings to keep tasks and deadlines on track. Be sure to:

- Set expectations
- Assign tasks
- Review key dates
- Schedule ongoing project meetings

Section III: Letter of Understanding

The Letter of Understanding (LOU) recognizes the neighborhood organization as the designated Mini-Grant recipient for the approved project.

Your Neighborhood Liaison will schedule a meeting with the association's president the week of January 12, 2026, to review the LOU in detail. The LOU is required to be signed by the neighborhood president and submitted along with a completed Prohibition Against Economic Incentives for Foreign Entities Affidavit and the Substitute W9 form no later than **Friday, January 16, 2026, by 5 p.m.** and before any Mini-Grant funds can be spent.

Spending Authorization for Mini-Grant Recipients

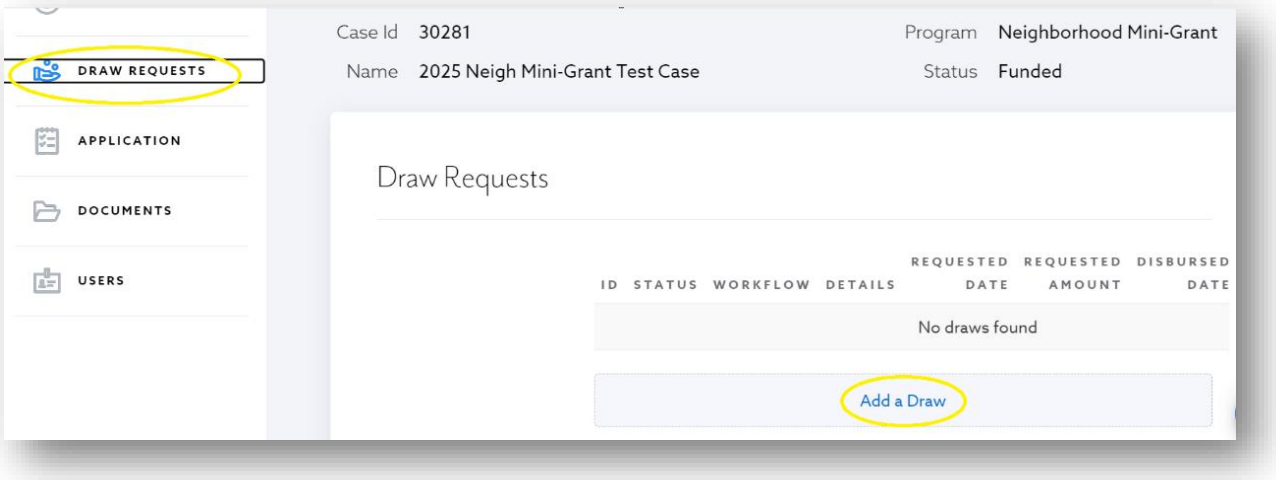
Mini-Grant funds may not be used until you receive confirmation from your Neighborhood Liaison that the signed Prohibition Against Economic Incentives for Foreign Entities Affidavit, Letter of Understanding, and the completed Substitute W-9 form have been received, and you are authorized to begin your project.

Section IV: Budget Procedures

Purchases by Hillsborough County

Hillsborough County Neighborhood Relations can purchase the recipient's approved budget items via a website or directly from a vendor. The information below is a step-by-step guide to help recipients create such purchase requests. **The Purchase Request deadline is Friday, June 26, 2026.**

Step One: Within the "*Draw Requests*" tab of the **Participant Portal**, click "*Add a Draw*."



Step Two: Within the "*Description*" window, include:

- Summary of items to be purchased by Hillsborough County, the quantity of each item, item number/code/SKU, and purchase price.
- Indicate whether you're requesting Hillsborough County to make a credit card purchase *(preferred method)* from a website or vendor by phone, or for Hillsborough County to issue a check to the vendor.

Vendor/store name. Include a website link if one exists.

- Include the items being purchased, quantity, SKU number, and purchase amount.
- Specify the delivery date provided by the vendor.
- Contact name, phone number, and address where items are to be shipped (or contact information of the party who is picking up)

- Click "*Add.*"

> ***NOTE:*** *Allow Hillsborough County three business days to process credit card purchases. Check payments may take up to six to eight weeks for processing and delivery. Hillsborough County cannot pay vendors utilizing Venmo, PayPal, or Square.*

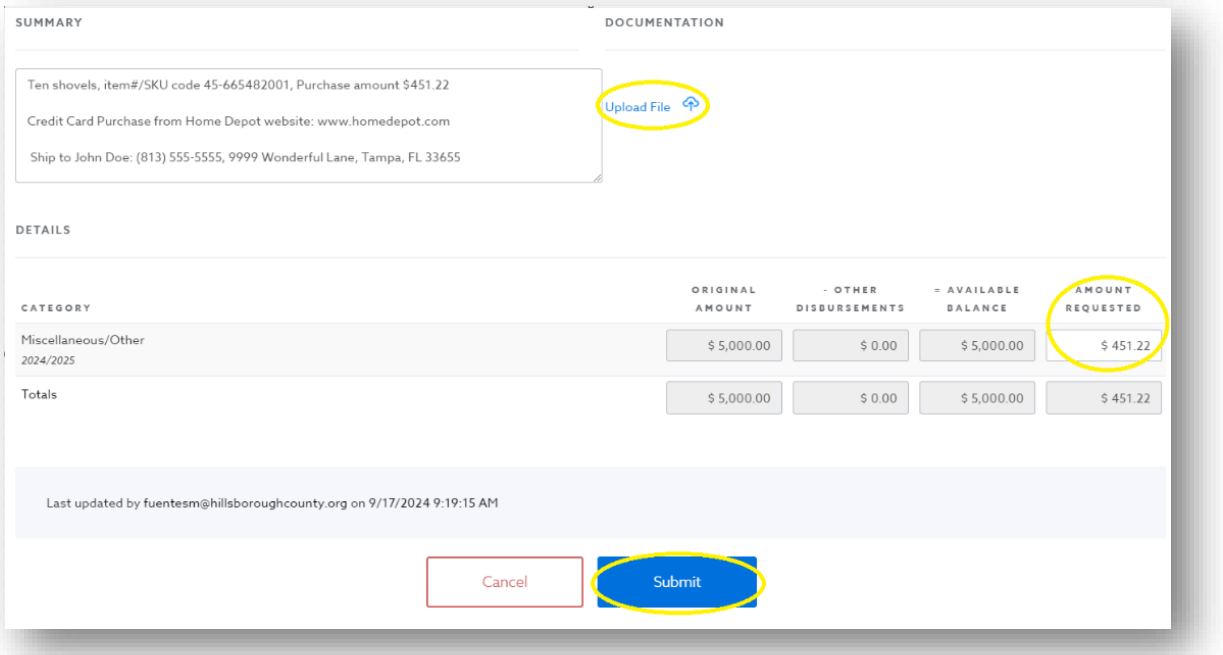
Step Three: Review, prepare, and upload your supporting documentation. Use the "*Upload File*" function to attach all supporting documentation. This could include a shopping cart list from a website or an itemized invoice. If submitting an invoice, please note the following:

- Confirm the invoice does not include Florida sales tax. Upon request, your Neighborhood Liaison can provide a copy of Hillsborough County's Tax-Exempt Certificate.
- Confirm the invoice amount to be paid by Hillsborough County does not exceed the approved budget amount. If the cost exceeds the budget, the vendor can either:
    - Split the invoice amount between Hillsborough County and the grantee and note which amount is to be paid by Hillsborough County, OR
    - Provide separate invoices - one for the grantee and another for Hillsborough County.

Example: Request to Purchase

Home Depot: www.homedepot.com
Ten shovels, item #/SKU code 45-665482001, Purchase amount $451.22
Delivery Date: May 25, 2026; all items will be delivered
Ship to John Doe: (813) 555-5555, 9999 Wonderful Lane, Tampa, FL 33655

Enter the amount you are requesting Hillsborough County to pay in the "*Amount Requested*" box. Ensure this amount is correct. If it is not, the draw request will not be approved and will be returned for correction. Click "*Submit*"



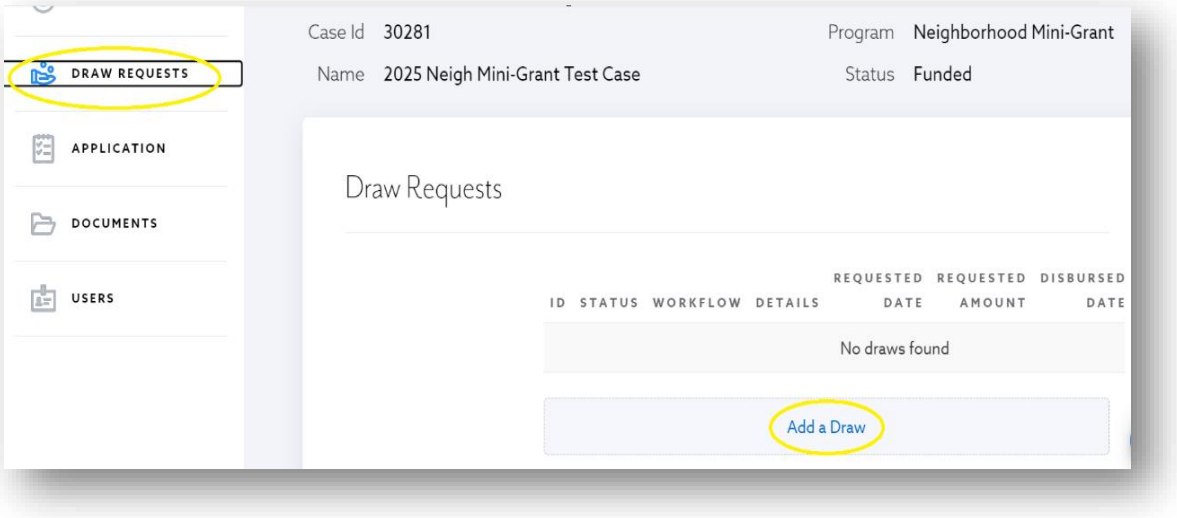
After you submit your request: Your Neighborhood Liaison will receive a notification via the Participant Portal that you have requested a draw and contact you only if further details are required. After the purchase, your Neighborhood Liaison will upload the following documents to the **Participant Portal**:

- Order confirmation
- Purchase receipt
- Projected shipment date (if applicable)

Reimbursements

Hillsborough County can reimburse up to the awarded amount as noted in the Letter of Understanding (LOU). Grantees are responsible for paying any overages. To be eligible for reimbursement, grant recipients must follow the steps detailed in this guide.

Step One: Within the "*Draw Requests*" tab of the **Participant Portal**, click "*Add a Draw*."



Step Two: Within the "*Description*" window, include:

- This is a Reimbursement Request.
- Name and contact information of the organization to be reimbursed.
- Include a summary of items purchased, the quantity of each, item number/SKU number, and purchase price.
- The total amount to be reimbursed (including fees and sales tax if applicable).
- Click "*Add.*"

Step Three: Review, prepare, and upload your supporting documentation. Use the "*Upload File*" function to attach the following:

- An itemized Receipt or Paid Invoice
    - This document should include the vendor's name and address, a list or description of the items/ services purchased and the number of each, the purchase price of each, any fees and/or tax paid, and any other pertinent details.
- Proof Of Purchase – This can include:
    - A receipt that shows the last four digits of the credit card used.

- A copy of the bank statement showing the charge for the item(s) being reimbursed.
- A copy of a check that has cleared the bank including the back and front. *Please redact any bank account numbers.*

- Substitute W9

Confirm the invoice amount to be reimbursed by Hillsborough County does not exceed the approved budgeted amount. If the cost exceeds the budget, the vendor can:

- Split the invoice amount between Hillsborough County and the grantee and note which amount is to be reimbursed by Hillsborough County, OR
- Provide separate invoices - one for the grantee and another for Hillsborough County.

> ***NOTE:*** *Neighborhood organizations are responsible for reimbursing individuals for personal expenses for purchases made for Mini-Grant budget-approved items.*

Example: Reimbursement Request

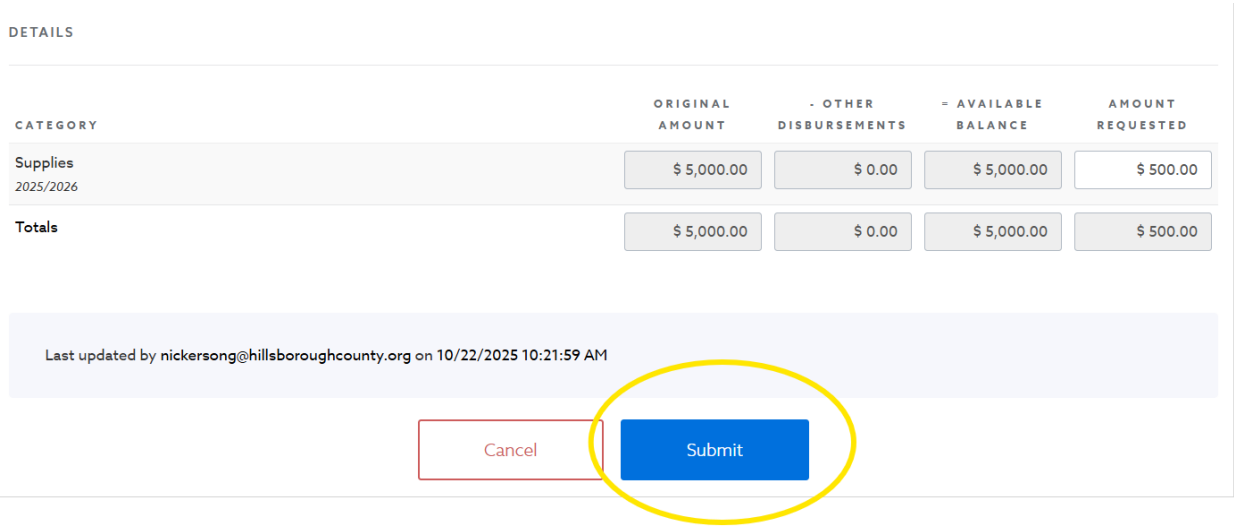
Reimbursement Request to:
Gray Gables Neighborhood Association
104 S. Glen Ave, Tampa FL 33609

Reimbursement for: DJ/Event Music - $500
Zero Proof- Charlie Rezoagli
3211 West Swann Ave #207
Tampa, FL 33609

> ***NOTE:*** *Hillsborough County will reimburse sales taxes paid by neighborhood organizations. To ensure timely processing, please make sure the receipt or invoice you upload is clear and legible. Illegible documentation will be returned for clarification, which will delay your reimbursement.*



Step Four: Enter the amount you are requesting Hillsborough County to reimburse in the "*Amount Requested*" box. Ensure this amount is correct. If it is not, the draw request will not be approved and will be sent back to you to be corrected. Click "*Submit*"



The Reimbursement Request deadline is Friday, July 17, 2026.

Budget Modification Requests

Mini-Grant projects must adhere to the budget outlined in the signed Letter of Understanding (LOU). Any modifications require prior written approval from Hillsborough County Neighborhood Relations. Budget modification requests due to factors beyond the grant recipient's control may be considered but are not guaranteed. Modifications outside the scope of the approved project will not be approved. Acceptable modifications include reallocating funds between approved budget line-items. If you have questions or need to request a modification, please contact your Neighborhood Liaison. **Budget Modification Requests deadline is Friday, June 17, 2026.**

To create a Budget Modification Request:
Email your Neighborhood Liaison and include the following information:

- ***Subject:*** Neighborhood Mini-Grant: (Your Organization's Name & Project) Budget Modification
- ***Details:*** In the body of the email, describe the changes you are requesting and the reason for each. A description of the proposed changes to each affected line item, including any cost differences.

If applicable, add proposal for reallocating funds to another line item. Your Neighborhood Liaison will review the request and inform you of the decision. They will contact you if more information is needed.

<u>Example: Request to Reallocate Funding:</u>
Subject: Neighborhood Mini Grant: Sunshine HOA Community Garden Budget Modification
Details: Sunshine HOA is requesting a budget modification for $72.43.We would like to purchase approved "free little library" materials, yet the vendor platform does not allow for charges to be split to be able to cover the shipping when purchasing, hence why Sunshine HOA outdoor bench line item ($489) and the surplus of their mini-library ($399.95 LOU amount) - $389.95 (current website price) = $10.00) to cover the cost of shipping their material ($72.43).

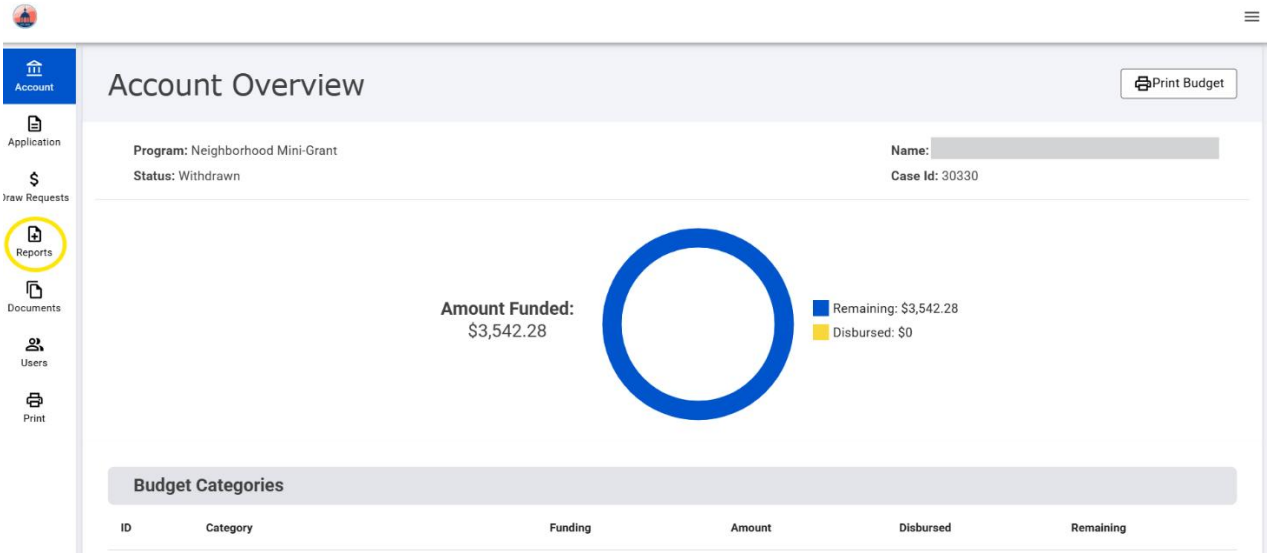
<u>Example: Request for Non-Budgeted Items</u>
Subject: Neighborhood Mini Grant: Sunshine HOA Community Garden Budget Modification

Details: As the project leader for Sunshine HOA, I would like to request a budget modification. We are unable to have our vertical garden trellises delivered in time to complete the project by the Mini-Grant deadline. We would like to purchase an outdoor bench in place of the trellises. We confirm that the outdoor bench is currently in stock locally and available for pick up by our project volunteers. We budgeted $561.43 for the garden trellises. We would like to reallocate this money to two new line items, which still support our scope of work. The bench is estimated to cost $489 with shipping and taxes included. We would like to reallocate the remaining $72.43 to shipping of the library stand. The shipping of the bench and library stand is not currently a line item budgeted within our signed Letter of Understanding.

Your Neighborhood Liaison will notify you via email to confirm the budget modification request status.

Section V. Reporting Requirements

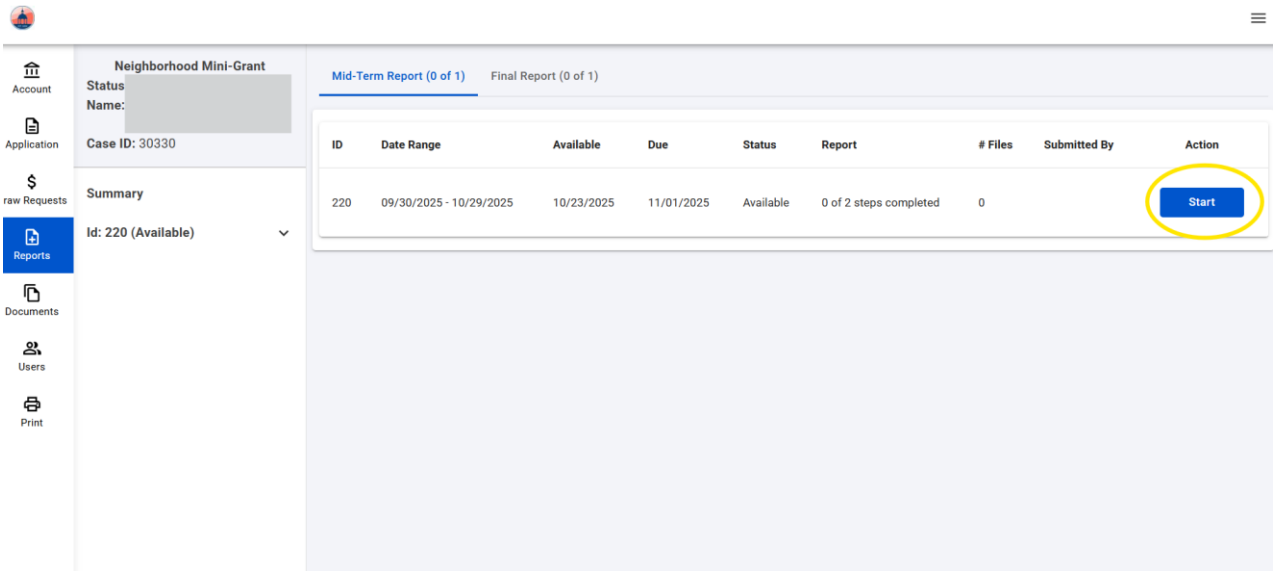
Participants are required to submit reports that provide updates on project accomplishments, the current phase of the project, and any issues or concerns encountered. Reports can be accessed through the *"Reports"* tab in the Participant Portal:



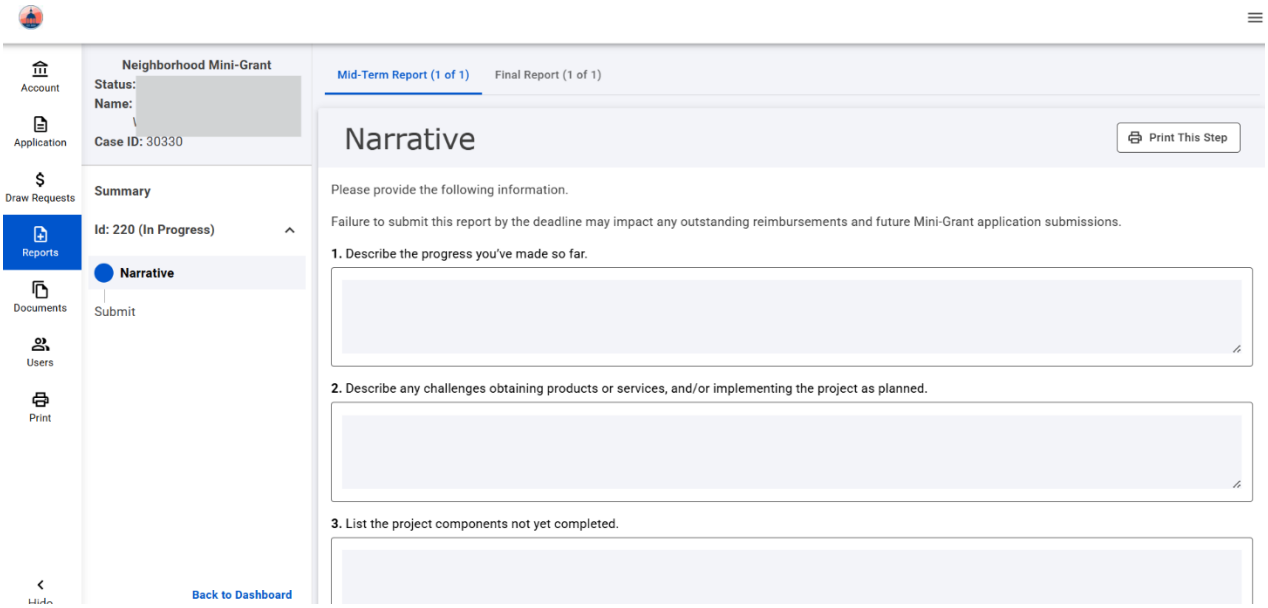
Mid-Term Report

The Mid-Term Report provides a status update on your project's progress. The steps below outline how to submit a Mid-Term Report in the Participant Portal. **Mid-Term Report submission deadline is Wednesday, April 1, 2026.**

Step One: Within the *"Reports"* select the *"Mid-Term Report"* section listed at the top. Once you are within this section, select the blue *"Start"* button on the left under *"Action"*.



You will be directed to the *"Narrative"* page.



Step Two: Within the Narrative page:

- Complete the narrative
- Select *"Save & Continue"*, you will be directed to the submit page
- Click *"Submit"*

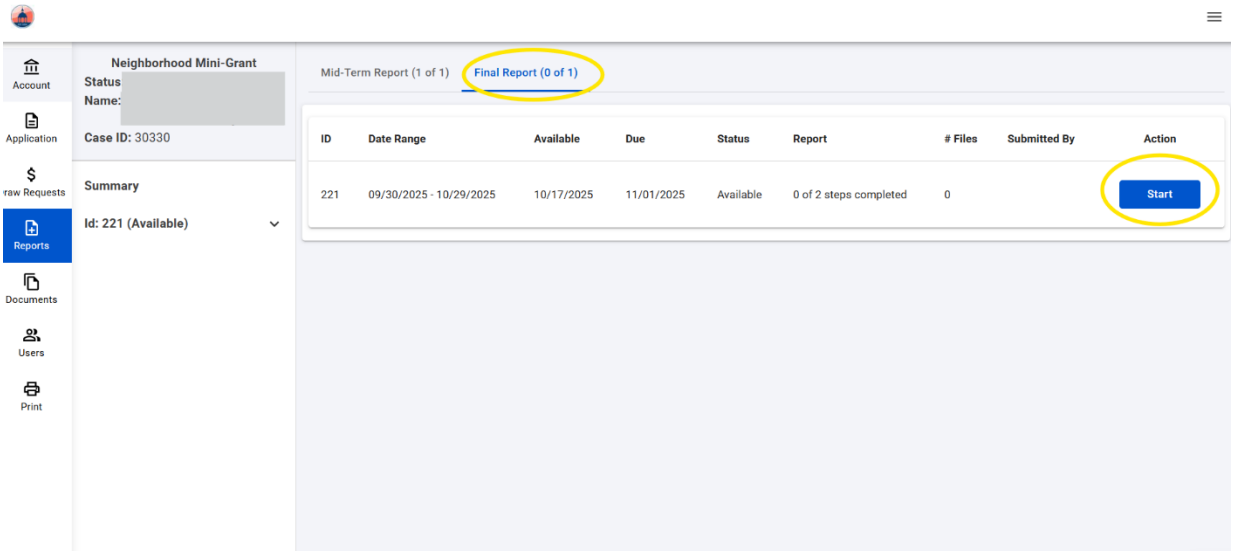
After reviewing your Mid-Term Report, your Neighborhood Liaison will schedule a follow-up meeting to review your project's current status and accomplishments, go over any questions you may have, and to review the upcoming deadlines and required steps.

Final Report

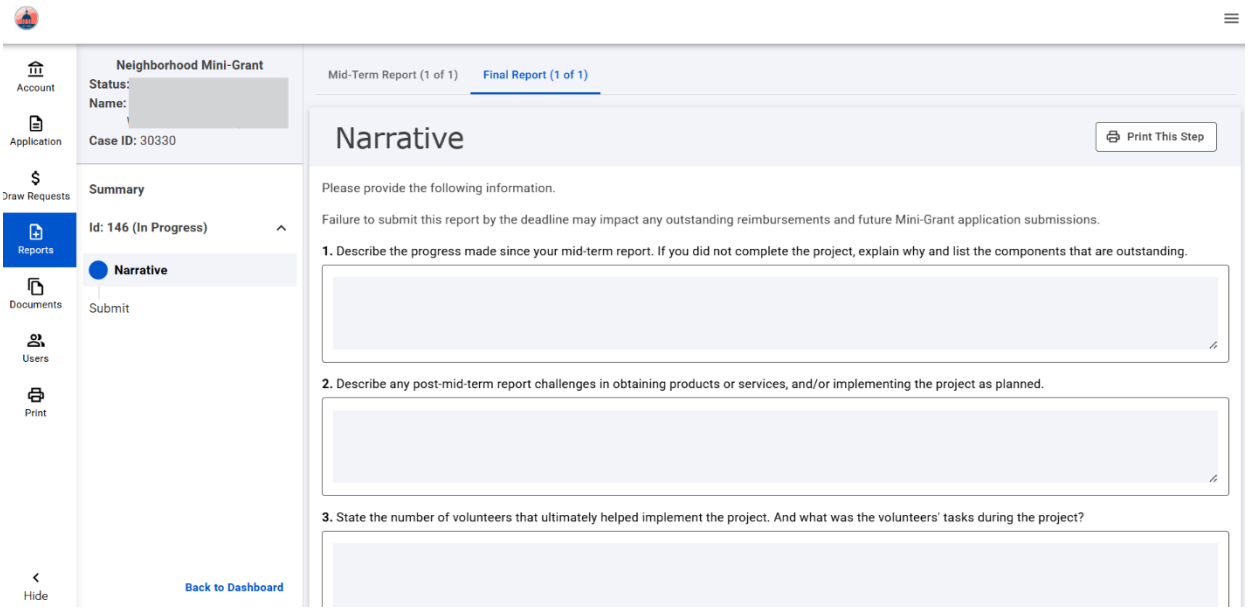
The Final Report summarizes the project's outcomes and includes images of the project. The steps below outline how to submit the Final Report in the Participant Portal. **Final Report submission**

deadline is Friday, July 31, 2026

Step One: Within the *"Reports"* tab select the *"Final Report"* section listed at the top. Once you are within this section, select the blue *"Start"* button on the left under *"Action"*.



You will be directed to the *"Narrative"* page.



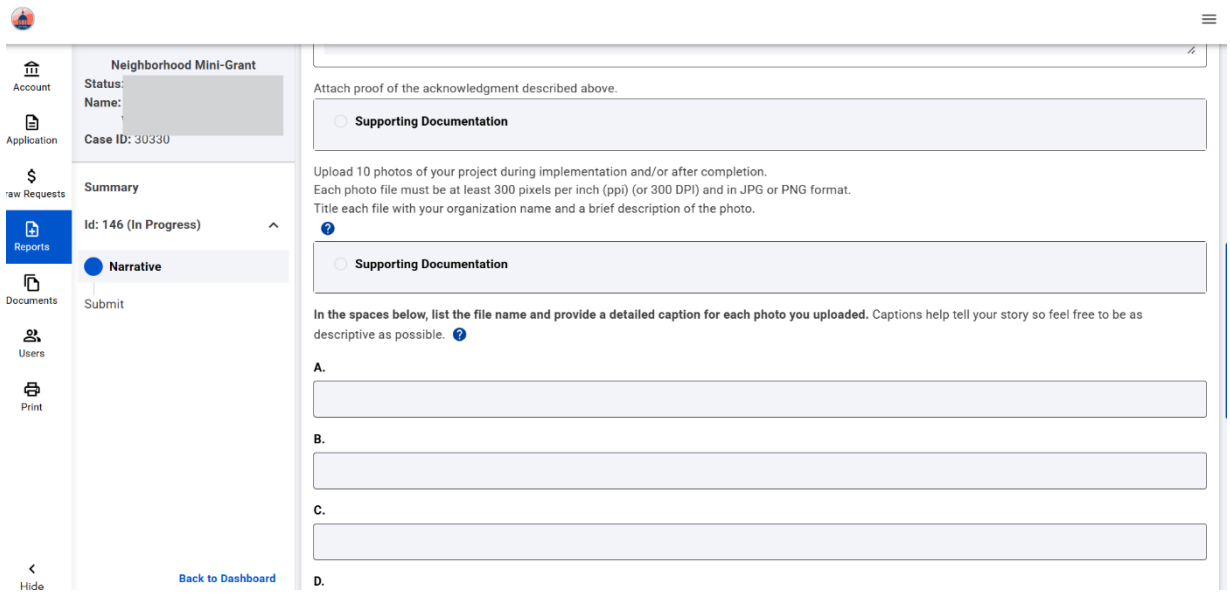
Step Two: Complete the *"Narrative"* section.

Step Three: Upload supporting documents, including:

- Proof of the Board of County Commissioners' Acknowledgment – Mini-grant recipients are required to acknowledge the Board of County Commissioners in connection with their project. Some examples:
    - Social Media Posts on mini-grant recipient site
    - On-site signage or plaques
    - Other forms of public recognition – consult with your neighborhood liaison

To request the Hillsborough County logo for your acknowledgement, send an email request to Neighborhood-Relations@hcfl.gov.

- Photos that illustrate the project lifecycle (a minimum of 10 photos) with a detailed caption for each photo.
    - Project area before, if applicable
    - Project in progress
    - Project completed in stages, if applicable
    - Celebratory project event
    - Group volunteers



Select "Save and Complete", which will direct you to the submit page. *Click "Submit"*.

Need help? We're here every step of the way! If you have any questions, contact your Neighborhood Relations Team at **Neighborhood-Relations@HCFL.gov** or **(813) 272-5860.**

END OF DOCUMENT