

Mayor Patrick McGrady's \$250 America 250 Block Party Grant

Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary in Aberdeen

The year 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. As communities across the nation commemorate this historic milestone, the City of Aberdeen is proud to participate with a series of America 250 events.

On Saturday, September 5, 2026, Aberdeen will host a George Washington and Rochambeau Parade along the historic route that General George Washington traveled through present-day Aberdeen in September 1781 on his way to the Yorktown Campaign.

To continue the celebration and strengthen neighborhood connections, Mayor Patrick McGrady is personally offering 10 grants of \$250 each to help residents host neighborhood block parties on **Sunday, September 6, 2026 (Labor Day Weekend).**

The purpose of this program is simple: bring neighbors together to meet one another, share a meal, celebrate our community, and reflect on 250 years of the American experience.

About the Grant

Each selected neighborhood will receive a \$250 grant to help offset the cost of its block party. Grant funds may be used for expenses such as:

- Food and non-alcoholic beverages
- Ice and paper products.
- Lawn games or family activities
- Bounce house rental.
- Decorations
- Other reasonable event expenses

Grant payments will be issued before **August 28, 2026***, giving organizers time to purchase supplies before Labor Day Weekend.

Only 10 grants are available and will be awarded on a first-completed, first-served basis.

Following each event, organizers are asked to submit several photos so their neighborhood celebration can become part of Aberdeen's official America 250 commemorative archive.

Building Bridges Across Aberdeen

At its heart, this program is about more than celebrating history it is about strengthening our community.

In today's busy world, many of us rarely have the opportunity to get to know the people who live just a few houses away. A neighborhood gathering creates a welcoming, low-pressure setting where residents can meet new neighbors, reconnect with longtime friends, and build lasting relationships.

Whether welcoming a new family to the block, bringing together neighbors from different generations, or simply enjoying an afternoon outdoors, these gatherings help strengthen the social fabric of Aberdeen one neighborhood at a time.

Choosing Your Location

Your block party does not have to take place in the street. You may choose to gather:

- In the front yard
- In a driveway
- On a shared green space
- In a cul-de-sac*
- On a residential street*

**If you would like to temporarily close a residential street, the City will assist with coordination through the Department of Public Works and the Aberdeen Police Department.*

Tips for Organizing Your Neighborhood

Getting neighbors involved is often easier than people expect. A personal invitation goes a long way. Some ideas include:

- Visit your neighbors. A friendly conversation at the front door or driveway is often the best way to generate interest.
- Distribute flyers. Leave a simple invitation with the event details and your contact information.
- Use neighborhood social media. Share information through Nextdoor, your HOA, or neighborhood Facebook groups.
- Invite neighbors to help. Ask volunteers to bring lawn games, desserts, coolers, or help with setup and cleanup.
- Keep it welcoming. Let everyone know they are invited, even if they can only stop by for a short visit.

The goal is not to host a perfect event—it is to create an opportunity for neighbors to spend time together.

How to Apply

Step 1 – Choose Your Location

Decide where your neighborhood gathering will be held.

1. Private Property: Front yard, driveway, patio, or common green space (no City permit required).
2. Residential Street: Temporary street closure (City staff will assist with coordination).

Step 2 – Talk With Your Neighbors

Invite nearby households to participate and begin planning your event together. Applications should demonstrate neighborhood participation by identifying the surrounding households that will be invited to the celebration.

Step 3 – Complete the Application

Complete the America 250 Neighborhood Block Party Grant Application. The application includes:

- Applicant information
- Event location
- Food and beverage plans
- Equipment and cleanup plan
- Community-building activity
- Applicant certification

Applications may be submitted beginning August 1, 2026.

Step 4 – Submit Your Application

Return your completed application by **5:00 p.m. August 28, 2026***. Applications may be submitted:

1. Online at DiscoverAberdeen.org/block-party
2. By email to pmcgrady@aberdennmd.gov
3. In person at Aberdeen City Hall

Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received. The first 10 complete and eligible applications will receive grant awards.

Step 5 – Receive Your Grant

Approved applicants will receive their \$250 grant **before September 2, 2026***, allowing time to purchase supplies before the holiday weekend.

Step 6 – Celebrate and Share

Host your neighborhood block party on Sunday, September 6, 2026. After the event, please submit two or three photographs including one group photos to pmcgrady@aberdennmd.gov by September 20, 2026.

Photos and neighborhood stories will be featured in the official "Faces of Aberdeen: 10 Blocks, 250 Years" digital showcase on DiscoverAberdeen.org and Aberdeen250.org, highlighting how neighbors came together to celebrate America's 250th anniversary and strengthen our community.

Important Dates

Date	Event
August 1, 2026	Applications open
August 28, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.*	Application deadline
Before September 2, 2026*	Grant payments issued
September 5, 2026	George Washington & Rochambeau Parade
September 6, 2026	America 250 Neighborhood Block Parties
September 20, 2026	Photos due

***Updated Dates/Deadlines as of August 24, 2026.**

Ready to Bring Your Neighborhood Together? Only 10 grants are available, so do not wait to apply. Celebrate America's 250th anniversary by gathering with your neighbors, creating new friendships, and helping make Aberdeen's America 250 celebration one to remember.

For additional information, contact:

Mayor Patrick McGrady

Email: pmcgrady@aberdeennmd.gov

