City of
LITTLE ROCK

TO: **NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

FROM: **ANDRE' BERNARD, DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: **2014 LOVE YOUR BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

DATE: **April 25, 2014**

The City of Little Rock is happy to announce a competitive grant program designed to help Neighborhood-Based Organizations (NBOs) meet their most pressing challenges through community service and focused city services. The purpose of the grant is to promote and increase volunteerism in the city while partnering with city staff to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

The City anticipates awarding twenty-eight (28) $1,000 grants **(Four (4) $1,000 grants in each Ward).** Any neighborhood-based organization registered with the City is eligible to apply. The objective of the Love Your Block Grant Program is to encourage projects that promote volunteerism, foster civic pride, enhance and beautify neighborhoods, or encourage improvements in the way residents connect and solve problems. **In order to assist you and your organization with your project, we require that you plan to complete your projects in the months of June through November of this year**. This will provide city staff with the opportunity to work with you and coordinate staff resources (mulch, debris removal, tools, etc.) to provide enhanced city services, thus making a bigger and lasting impact to your neighborhood.

Please review the enclosed information carefully, complete the grant application documents and return the forms to **Housing and Neighborhood Programs, ATTN: Andre Bernard, 500 West Markham, Ste., 120 West, Little Rock, AR 72201.**

If you have questions regarding this grant program, please contact Andre Bernard or Chris Bennett at 371-6825.

The deadline for submitting all applications is 4:00 p.m., Friday, May 30, 2014.

City of Little Rock-Little Rock Serves
2014 Love Your Block Grant Program

Program Objective

The objective of the Love Your Block Grant Program is to promote and encourage volunteerism in the city through completion of neighborhood- based projects that foster civic pride, enhance and beautify neighborhoods, and expand citizen involvement in local government. The City of Little Rock seeks well-qualified neighborhood-based organizations to submit proposals that will result in impactful improvement to the neighborhoods they serve. Citizens across the city are the best caretakers of their neighborhoods, and the Love Your Block Grant Program will help to foster a sense of community and belonging.

Project Description: Specific goals of the initiative:

- **To encourage block and civic associations throughout the seven wards to engage their members in an organized, one-day event held between June, 2014 and November 30, 2014, that aims to beautify their block;**
- **To support and provide resources in the form of a cash grant to associations; and**
- **To bring relevant and focused City services that will support the efforts of each association.**

Community grants

The City of Little Rock Department of Housing and Neighborhood will administer up to twenty-eight (28) grants, each for up to $1,000 to eligible Neighborhood-Based Organizations ("NBOs"). The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs will manage fund dispersal, provide technical assistance and guidance to NBOs, and facilitate City services. City services will be provided by Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and other City Departments.

Data Collection and Reporting

NBOs will be required to report the following information to the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs on a monthly basis (June-November, 2014):

- Detailed descriptions of all proposed activities;
- Before and after digital pictures of beautification projects;
- The number of volunteers engaged in the Project; and
- Other impact metrics found in the formal Application.

General Grant Policies

NBO's submitting proposals for grant funds must meet the following criteria:

- Organizations must be registered with the City of Little Rock Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs.
- Proposers must operate as a not-for-a-profit organization in nature and their Projects will not exclude the general public from use, if applicable.
- Proposals must have lasting and/or a direct benefit to the neighborhood.
- If awarded, organizations must maintain records reflecting program expenditures, number of volunteers taking part in the Project and in-kind contributions. These records are to be made available to the City in the Final Report.
- Grant recipients will hold the City harmless of all claims of every kind and character that may arise out of, or are in any way connected to, the project.
- Grant recipients are considered independent contractors and not as agents of the City.
- Proposed projects must be within the established, recognized and registered boundaries of the organization submitting the Proposal. (Requests for an exception to this requirement will be considered on a case-by-case basis).

Selection Criteria:

Each NBO must have a detailed and realistic Project Plan for engaging residents to carry out a physical transformation of the public spaces on their block. Specifically, each NBO must:

- Operate on a not-for-a-profit basis. For purpose of this Love Your Block Grant Program, an organization operating on a not-for-a-profit basis is defined as a corporation, organization, or association that exists for charitable and/or public purposes without a profit motive or shareholders.
- Demonstrate the ability to mobilize a minimum of 20 neighborhood volunteers to take part in the revitalization of their block.
- Include one of more block beautification event(s) in its/their action plan to occur between June 2014 and November 30, 2014.
- Send **two** main contacts to a grant orientation workshop where they will meet with representatives from the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs.
- Please respond to all questions in the following three sections, following the same order as this application. Date the application and title it "2014 Love Your Block Grant Program". Please attach separate pages for your responses to all questions (see below), and number paragraphs accordingly.
- The following projects will be prioritized: blocks within a 500 foot radius of an elementary, middle or high school (this should be noted in the grant application); projects that address one or more vacant lots; and, projects that benefit a business district. All projects meeting the above selection criteria will be considered for funding.

- After project completion, grantees will be required to submit digital photos of the block that was revitalized, and a written report that includes the number of blocks (or other geographic unit such as number of vacant lots or neighborhoods) revitalized, **AND** at least two of the following: square feet of graffiti removed; pounds of litter collected; number of trees planted; and/or number of green spaces or community gardens created. Other questions will include but may not be limited to:
    - Specific communities impacted or engaged through the initiative, if any (such as veterans, seniors, youth, etc.);
    - Number of citizens who participated in the transformation of the space;
    - Number of physical resources created (such benches, picnic tables, planters/flowerboxes), if any; and
    - Any anecdotal information you can share about the use of the space following the transformation (OPTIONAL).

Section 1: General Information:

1. What is your organization's name?
2. List two contacts for your organization, along with their phone number and Email address.
3. What is your organization's mailing address?
4. If your organization has a web site, what is the URL?
5. When was your organization formed (month/year)? If your organization is new, is this the first project it is undertaking?
6. What neighborhood does your organization work in?
7. Briefly describe (no more than 250 words) your organization's purpose, history, and accomplishments.

Section 2: Project Description:

1. Please describe your block in detail. Please include an estimate of the block's demographics.
2. What are some of the specific concerns you have about its physical appearance? **Mandatory**: Include photographs of the present state of the site/block in your application.
3. How would you like to improve its physical appearance?
4. Please include a detailed action plan that indicates the various steps your organization will take to carry out the block improvement project. Please refer to the template below, complete on a separate sheet of paper, and attach it to your application. (Note: Project participants will be required to sign releases/waivers of liability when performing projects on City property and/or performing projects on private property using City-awarded grant funds. Written permission of property owners will be required for projects on private property.)

EXAMPLES follow:

Action	Person or people Responsible for carrying out the action	Date(s) the action(s) will take place	Intended outcome(s)
For example: Distribute fliers to all neighbors announcing the event and upcoming Planning meeting	John Smith Linda Jones	July 21-22 Aug 1-2 Sep 7-8	Raise awareness about upcoming event; recruit new resident volunteers to attend planning meeting and take part in the event

5. What materials will you need? Please provide a budget that includes all planned expenses related to the project. Love Your Block grants are up to a $1000.00 reimbursable grant from the City of Little Rock. Grants do not cover personnel costs or ongoing operating costs. The City reserves the right to require lease, rather than purchase, of certain equipment.

   Costs included in this budget should only consist of one-time expenses related to the project and/or items such as equipment or supplies. Please refer to the template below, complete on a separate sheet of paper, and attach it to your application.

Item	Description of Use	Cost
For example: Paint	To paint the walls surrounding the community garden	$50.00
	TOTAL	**$50.00**

6. How will you reach out to your neighbors to encourage participation? How will you involve them? How many neighborhood participants do you anticipate becoming involved?

7. Will you work with local businesses and other community-based organizations? If so, in what capacity? Please name each business engaged.

8. How do you plan on sustaining the changes your project will create? (i.e., for a block clean-up, what is your plan for keeping the block clean?)

Important Note on City Services – Please read carefully:
As part of this grant, each organization can receive support from various City departments. Below is a list of City services that are available through this program. Grantees will be able to learn more about these services at the Grantee Orientation.

- *Provide trash collection services and litter clean-up supplies (bags and gloves) for the block project*
- *Clean City-owned vacant lot(s)*
- *Remove undesired, City-owned trees from tree pits & prune overgrown, City-owned trees*
- *Graffiti removal on City property*
- *Repair damaged/missing street signage*
- *Board up vacant, City-owned building(s)*
- *Fill pothole(s)*
- *Survey block for new tree planting opportunities on City-owned property or in the public right-of-way*
- *Prioritize demolition(s)*
- *Investigate building code violation(s)*
- *Provide information about grant and loan programs available to Little Rock homeowners*
- *Provide information about community greening resources and other resources available for business districts*

Please note that requests for service are not guaranteed. City departments will review requests and will fulfill as feasible.

Grants funds must be expended within the grant window (June 2014-November 30, 2014). Completion of projects shall not be dependent on additional or future funding from the City.

Proposals will be reviewed and selected by a committee composed of City Senior Staff. All selected applications will be forwarded to the City Board for funding.

Grant Guidelines

All grant proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 30, 2014.

Up to a $1,000.00 reimbursement from the City of Little Rock will be awarded to the applicant at the conclusion of the Project and after meeting all grant submission requirements. Therefore, it is extremely important that all grant recipients keep receipts and accurate financial records of costs associated with each project.

The maximum grant award will be **$1,000 per proposal.** A minimum 25% match in the form of either donated materials, donated equipment and/or in-kind labor (volunteers) is required. (NOTE: Donated labor is calculated at a rate of $10/hour. Volunteer hours must be documented by forms provided by the City of Little Rock. Additionally, these grant dollars are subject to audit by the City's internal audit staff. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each organization receiving a grant to keep accurate records of all expenditures and in-kind contributions.

Examples of Previously Approved Projects

- Footbridge across park pond;
- Upgrading of playground equipment;
- Landscaping of neighborhood parks or common areas;
- Replacement of roofs on community buildings and storage facilities;
- Sprinkler systems for parks and flower beds;
- Entry signs into neighborhoods;
- Installation of house numbers;
- Purchase of tools, mowers, weed eaters and landscaping equipment to set up a too-loan inventory;
- Storage sheds for neighborhood equipment;
- Equipment and supplies to publish and distribute newsletters, flyers, brochures, etc.;
- Equipment for crime watch programs;
- Litter control activities and equipment;
- Park benches and grills;
- Summer jobs for youth;
- Neighborhood sponsored youth activities;
- Youth tutoring programs; and
- Construction of neighborhood basketball courts.

The deadline for submitting your grant application is 4:00 p.m., Friday, May 30, 2014.

If awarded, City staff will notify the Project Coordinator identified in the Project Proposal. All approved and funded organizations are required to attend a mandatory meeting for a brief orientation on the grant and to coordinate city resources for your project.

Love Your Block Grant Agreement

Name of Neighborhood-Based Organization:_____

Grant Period: June 1, 2014 – November 30, 2014

Total Grant Amount: Not-to-Exceed $1,000.00

To receive this award, the grant recipient hereby agrees to the following:

1. **Payment of the grant**:
   a. The grant is payable in up to two (2) installments.
   b. **Up to a $1,000.00 reimbursement from the City of Little Rock** will be awarded to the applicant at the conclusion of the Project and after meeting all grant submission requirements.
2. The project, as outlined in the grant application, must be completed by **November 30, 2014.**
3. Send **two** main contacts to a grant orientation workshop where they will meet with representatives from the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs.
4. The grantee is required to:
   a. Maintain separate, complete and accurate records of expenditures of grant funds.
   b. Keep original invoices, canceled checks, and receipts for at least two (2) years after the funds are spent.
   c. Demonstrate the ability to mobilize a minimum of 20 neighborhood volunteers to take part in the revitalization of their block.
   d. Meet all Grant reporting requirements.
5. **Neighborhood Organizations that were awarded 2013 Love Your Block Grants but failed to provide the required information to close out those grants will not be eligible for 2014 awards, unless an extension was requested before the end of 2013. If the required information is provided before Friday, May 23, 2014, your 2014 application may be considered.**

If the above correctly reflects your organization's understanding of the arrangements made regarding this grant, please sign and return to the following:

Mr. Andre' Bernard
City of Little Rock
Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs
City Hall, 500 West Markham, Suite 120W
Little Rock, AR 72201

_____
Name and title (Please print)

_____ _____
Signature Date

Love Your Block Grant Program

Grant Application

Date:_____

Name of association/organization:_____

President:_____

Address:_____

_____

Contact Person:

Phone Number:_____

E-mail Address:_____

Project Location:_____

Contact Person:

Phone Number:_____

E-mail Address:_____

Project Location:_____

Name, phone number and e-mail address of the person responsible for writing and implementation of the grant:

Name:_____

Phone Number:_____

E-mail:_____

The deadline for submitting your grant application is
4:00 p.m., Friday, May 30, 2014.

1. **What is the association's/organization's objective in using grant funds?**

2. **Description of project(s).**
(If application contains multiple projects, list them in priority order)

3. **Describe how your organization will match grant funds with cash or in-kind services.**

4. **If this project is part of a larger plan, please explain the relationship and indicate the final expectations.**

5. **How will the project benefit your neighborhood?**

6. **How will this project promote volunteerism and benefit nearby Little Rock residents?**

_____ _____

Neighborhood-Based Organization President Date

Applications are due by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 30, 2014

Please submit your application to:
Mr. Andre Bernard
Little Rock Housing and Neighborhood Programs
500 West Markham, Suite 120 West
Little Rock, AR 72201