



# LITTLE ROCK SERVES

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**TO: NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

**FROM: MICHAEL J. DRAKE, CHIEF SERVICE OFFICER**

**SUBJECT: 2012 NEIGHBORHOOD CHALLENGE-LOVE YOUR BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

**DATE: May 10, 2012**

Thanks to a generous \$10,000.00 grant from the Home Depot Foundation, the Little Rock Board of Directors 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 thirty-five (35) \$1,000 grants (**Five (5) \$1,000 grants in each Ward**). Any neighborhood-based organization registered with the City is eligible to apply. The objective of the Neighborhood Challenge-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 group 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 Michael Drake at 244-5486, or Andre Bernard at 371-6825.

**The deadline for submitting all applications is 5:00 p.m., Friday, June 15, 2012.**

## **City of Little Rock-Little Rock Serves 2012 Neighborhood Challenge-Love Your Block Grant Program**

### **Program Objective**

The objective of the Neighborhood Challenge-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 Neighborhood Challenge-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 24, 2012 and November 30, 2012, 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 Programs, in partnership with Little Rock Serves, will administer up to thirty-five (35) 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 in coordination with Little Rock Serves. 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 for submission to Little Rock serves on a monthly basis (June-November, 2012):

- 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 Neighborhood Challenge-Love Your Block Grant Program, an organization operating on a not-for-a-profit basis is defined as a corporation, group, 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 24 and November 30, 2012.
- Send two main contacts to a grant orientation workshop where they will meet with representatives from the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs, Little Rock Serves and select City agencies.
- Please respond to all questions in the following three sections, following the same order as this application. Date the application and title it "2012 Neighborhood Challenge-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 referral to the City Board of Directors 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 group's name?
2. List two contacts for your group, along with their phone number and Email address.
3. What is your group's mailing address?
4. If your group has a web site, what is the URL?
5. When was your group formed (month/year)? If your group is new, is this the first project it is undertaking?
6. What neighborhood does your group work in?
7. Briefly describe (no more than 250 words) your group'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 group 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:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Person or people Responsible for carrying out the action</b>	<b>Date(s) the action(s) will take place</b>	<b>Intended outcome(s)</b>
<i>For example:</i> 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. Neighborhood Challenge-Love Your Block grants are in the form of \$500 Home Depot gift cards and up to a \$500.00 reimbursable grant from the City of Little Rock. Grants do not cover personnel costs or ongoing operating costs. (Please note that the first twenty (20) approved Projects will receive one \$500 Home Depot gift card. An authorized agent of any selected group will be required to sign a mini-grant agreement prior to receipt of a gift card.) 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.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description of Use</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<i>For example:</i> Paint	To paint the walls surrounding the community garden	\$50.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>

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 group 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 24-November 30, 2012). 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 5:00 p.m. Friday, June 15, 2012.**

The first twenty (20) approved and awarded Grants will receive a **\$500.00** Home Depot Gift Card conveyed at the execution of the grant Agreement. **Up to a \$500.00 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. **A \$500.00 Home Depot Gift Card will be awarded to the first twenty (20) grants that are approved.**

The maximum grant award will be **\$1,000 per proposal**. In-kind dollar value of materials, equipment and labor (volunteers) are encouraged but not required. 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 5:00 p.m.,  
Friday, June 15, 2012.**

**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.**

**Neighborhood Challenge-Love Your Block Grant Agreement**

**Name of Neighborhood-Based Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grant Period: June 24, 2012 – November 30, 2012**

**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 of \$500.00.
  - b. A \$500.00 Home Depot Gift Card will be awarded to the first twenty (20) grantees. **Up to a \$500.00 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, 2012.**
3. **Send two** main contacts to a grant orientation workshop where they will meet with representatives from the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs, Little Rock Serves and select City agencies.
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 one year 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.

If the above correctly reflects your group’s understanding of the arrangements made regarding this grant, please sign and return to Mr. Ward Hanna, Little Rock **Housing and Neighborhood Programs, City Hall, 500 West Markham, Little Rock, Ar. 72201**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and title (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature





**2012 Neighborhood Challenge-Love Your Block Grant Program**

**Grant Application**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of association/organization: \_\_\_\_\_

President: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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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  
5:00 p.m., Friday, June 15, 2012.**

**1. What is the associations/organizations 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?**

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Neighborhood-Based Organization President

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Date

**Applications are due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 15, 2012**

**Please submit your application to:**

**Mr. Andre Bernard**

**Little Rock Housing and Neighborhood Programs**

**500 West Markham, Ste. 120 West**

**Little Rock, AR 72201**