



Love Your Block

Mini-Grant Request for Proposal

INTRODUCTION

Love Your Block is a partnership initiative between the City of Buffalo, Cities of Service, Cities RISE, and Keep WNY Beautiful to empower community-led projects that eliminate blight and provide measurable visual and physical improvements in their neighborhoods. The long-term goals of the program include increased quality of life, increased safety within the participating neighborhoods, and increased social cohesion. The purpose of the Mini-Grant Program is to provide resources and funding to block clubs, community-based organizations, and small, locally-owned businesses for the implementation of volunteer-led projects addressing blighted public spaces in their neighborhoods. Residents may apply for projects with a budget of up to \$1,500.

IMPORTANT DATES*

- Application Release Date: April 15, 2021
- Pop Up Events: Various Dates, March through May 2021
- Application Due Date: May 27, 2021
- Winners Announced: June 11, 2021
- Mandatory Winners Workshop: TBA
- Projects Begin: July 1, 2021
- Project Completion Deadline: October 31, 2021

POP-UP EVENTS

The Love Your Block Team will be hosting pop-up events at various public spaces in target neighborhoods for interested residents to stop by for program information and application assistance. Pop-Ups will be held throughout the city until application deadline. Please visit our website or social media pages for Pop-Up locations, dates, and times: www.buffalony.gov/1181/LoveYourBlock & www.facebook.com/Buffaloveyourblock

We look forward to receiving your applications. Your dedication to the community is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about Love Your Block and the application, please reach out to the Love Your Block Team at **716-851-5515** or loveyourblock@city-buffalo.com.

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOPS

A technical assistance will be available virtually or in person by appointment to those who are interested in applying for the Love Your Block grant. The workshops will focus on how to fill out applications, develop ideas for projects, draft maintenance plans, and recruit volunteer assistance for projects to be completed in the community. Workshops will be held until application deadline.

PROJECT CATEGORIES

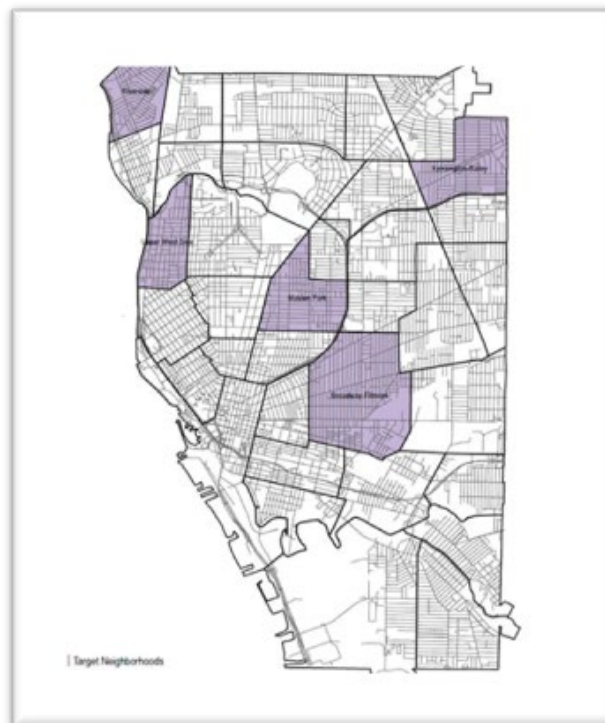
Proposed projects must fall under one of the four categories listed below.

Vacant Lot Activation: Community garden/greenhouse, playground, public art installation, and recreational space

Community Space Revitalization: Repairs or modifications to community facilities (schools, community centers, park shelters, senior centers, etc.), graffiti removal and/or replacement of graffiti with a mural, planting trees and/or landscaping community facilities

Accessibility Improvements: Implementing creative lighting, replacing broken or worn-out litter bins, creating/managing a “tool library” where neighborhood groups can borrow & return tools for cleanup projects

Streetscape Improvements: Community volunteer-led beautification on the business strips in the five identified target areas. This includes landscaping, art installments, pedestrian spaces, lighting improvements, and public safety.



ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Block clubs, community-based organizations, or small, locally owned businesses in one of five target areas (**Broadway-Fillmore, Kensington-Bailey, Masten Park, Riverside, and Upper West Side**) are eligible for funding. Block clubs and community-based organizations outside of these five neighborhoods are eligible to apply, however preference will be given to projects in these neighborhoods.

In order to qualify for the Love Your Block application process, each group will be asked to:

- Describe their organization's/business's background, history, and goals
- Propose a revitalization project that addresses a specific blight problem in their neighborhood and identify an exact location for the project
- Recruit 10 or more committed volunteers
- Propose a budget that does not exceed \$1,500, or otherwise provide evidence of additional funds & in-kind donations
- Submit a plan that outlines how the project will be maintained after the grant period

Priority will be given to applicants who:

- Apply jointly with other community partners such as nonprofits, local businesses, or educational institutions
- Secure additional resources through fund matching or in-kind donations
- Show clear use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in their project design

❖ Business Applicants

In order to be eligible for the grant, businesses must be less than 50 employees and be owned by a resident of the City of Buffalo. Businesses must also partner with local block clubs and/or nonprofit organizations. In order to maximize impact, business applicants will be required to match the awarded grant funds.

Businesses must be located in a target neighborhood with preference given to the following business strips:

- Broadway-Fillmore: Broadway between Jefferson Ave. and Milburn
- Kensington-Bailey: Bailey Ave. between Winspear Ave. and Route 33
- Masten Park: Jefferson Ave between Best St. and Main St.
- Riverside: Tonawanda St. between Arthur St. and Vulcan St.
- Upper West Side: Grant St. between Hampshire St and Letchworth St.
OR Niagara St. between Albany St. and Forest Ave.

❖ Applicants Proposing Projects on City-Owned Vacant Lots

For all projects proposed to take place on City-Owned vacant lots, an agreement must be made with Grassroots Gardens of WNY for insurance purposes. A limited number of lots that are not already a part of the Grassroots Garden Network will be able to partner with the group for this year's grant cycle. If your project is proposed to take place on a City-Owned vacant lot, please communicate this with the Love Your Block Team prior to the application deadline.

❖ **Applicants Proposing Projects in City of Buffalo Parks or City Sidewalks**

Projects proposed to take place in a City of Buffalo Park or on City sidewalks are subject to additional review and approval by the Department of Public Works, the Division of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Permits and Inspections, prior to the Love Your Block review process.

Some general guidelines for LYB projects are not limited to, but may include:

- Public art pieces are additionally subject to Buffalo Arts Commission protocol and must include a plan for maintenance, upkeep, and replacement in the case of vandalism.
- Community gardens in Parks require a commitment by the organization/group for maintenance, and direct coordination with Parks operations regarding proposed location.
- City of Buffalo park benches and other proposed structures or amenities must meet city specifications.

INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Grant funds may be used only for the implementation of visual and physical neighborhood improvement projects and cannot fall under the following:

- The primary purpose of the grant cannot be the advancement of any religious purpose. Projects must serve the secular purposes of neighborhood revitalization.
- Project may not duplicate an existing program (Funds may not be used for infrastructure improvement: curbs, sidewalks or repaving of a street.) Funds cannot be used for initial planning and/or concept design, however, construction drawings are considered a part of implementation.
- Funds may not be used for purchase of holiday lights and decorations, t-shirts, lawn mowers, and other power tools.
- Funds may not be used for the improvement of private properties **unless applicants get approval from the property owner.**
- The purchase of small tools and equipment is not allowed **unless your organization has written agreement from a local CBO that such items will be kept in their possession and made available to the community at large.**
- Salaries, overhead, and any cost associated with fundraising are not eligible.
- Soft projects such as social services, training, award ceremonies, or parties are not eligible.

The following restrictions apply:

- Former Love Your Block grant recipients cannot re-apply before they complete the project(s) funded by this grant.
- Individuals and government/public agencies are NOT eligible to apply.

TERMS

- Grants awarded are up to \$1500.
- Projects must be completed by **October 31, 2021** or funding will be terminated.
- Funds are given directly through a pre-approved list of supply distributors during project implementation. Grantees will submit invoices to vendors, and the Love Your Block staff will pay the vendor upon invoice approval.
- Proof of permission to use public land is required if the proposed project is located on public land, including a right-of-way (The Division of Citizen Services can assist with this). Permission from the property owner is required if the proposed project is located on private land.
- Original invoices are required for funding disbursement.
- Grant funds may be used only for items included in the application.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Grant applications are due on **May 3, 2021**. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions within 30 days of this date. **Please consider the time frame necessary for the application processing when you plan your organization's project.** Please submit a Word Document or PDF form via email to **loveyourblock@city-buffalo.com** OR send **one original and one additional copy** of the application by **5:00 p.m.** on May 3, 2021 to:

ATTN: Love Your Block
Division of Citizen Services, 218 City Hall
65 Niagara Square
Buffalo, NY 14202

APPLICATION EVALUATION

The Love Your Block staff, along with a peer-review board of block club and community members, will review each proposed project and send a letter of approval or denial to each applicant. Love Your Block staff may reach out to the applicant if any additional information is needed or to make project recommendations.

PROJECT & IMPACT EVALUATION

The Love Your Block team, with City staff and community partners, will evaluate all funded projects throughout implementation. Evaluation will include, but will not be limited to: photographs, post-project surveys and data collection reports, and fiscal reviews of expenditures. If a project fails to stay within stated guidelines, all remaining funds will be retracted and the organization will be disqualified from future funding. Projects may be featured in a newsletter or feature projects, or on Love Your Block & Division of Citizen Service's social media. We will also host an event after the completion of projects to celebrate the efforts of the grantees and their community.



Buffalo Love Your Block Grant Program Application 2021

Copies of this form are available through the Division of Citizen Services located at 65 Niagara Square, 218 City Hall or visit: www.buffaloveyourblock.org
Completed applications can be submitted in 218 City Hall or via email (loveyourblock@city-buffalo.com)

Organization/Business Information:

Name of Organization/Business: _____

Organization/Business Address: _____

Organization or Business Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Organization or Business E-mail: _____

Project Lead(s) Contact Information:

Project Lead 1 Name and Title: _____

Project Lead 1 Email: _____ Project Lead 1 Phone: _____

Project Lead 2 Name and Title: _____

Project Lead 2 Email: _____ Project Lead 2 Phone: _____

Proposed Project Information:

Proposed Project Title: _____

Project Category (check one):

Vacant Lot Activation

Community Space Revitalization

Accessibility Improvements

Streetscape Improvements

Project location and address: _____

Estimated project start and finish dates: _____

Grant Amount Requested	Cash Match	In-Kind Match	Total Project Cost

Has a representative from your group participated in a City of Buffalo CPTED training? YES / NO

Please attach proof of registration of Block Club if possible.

Signature of Lead Organizer: _____

(Please print name)

I. NARRATIVE

A. Organization Background and Capacity (10 points)

- Briefly describe your organization or business's history, mission, and goals. **(5 points)**

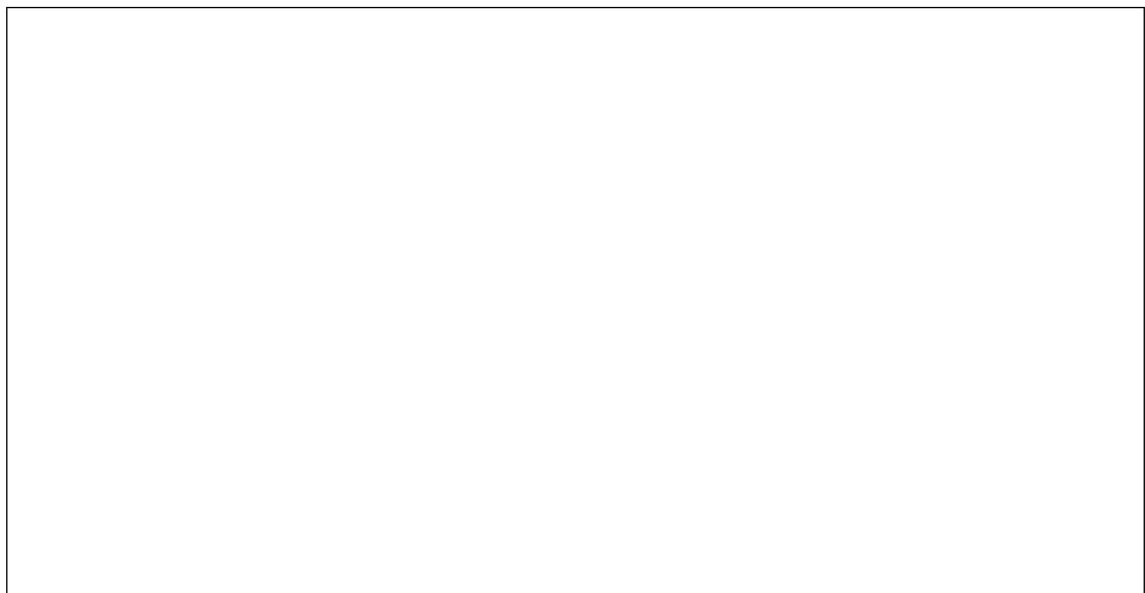
- What are your organization or business's current activities and past accomplishments? **(5 points)**

B. Community Problem & Needs Assessment (10 points)

- Briefly explain the need or problem your group wishes to address. **(7 points)**



- Describe the project's potential for crime prevention and safety, using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles if possible. **(3 points)**



C. Project Activities (25 points)


- Give a detailed description of the proposed project action plan with rough timeline estimates. **(15 points)**

Estimated Date	Action	Details
<i>Ex. 7/1/2021</i>	<i>Ex. Planting</i>	<i>Ex. Community volunteers will be gathering to plant flowers in the garden</i>

- Roughly how many volunteers does this project require? From where in the community does your organization plan to recruit volunteers (schools, churches, community centers, block clubs, etc.)? **(5 points)**

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- Include information about any other partners involved in the proposed project. How will they be involved and what specific contributions will they make? **(5 points)**

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D. Impact (10 points)

- Winners will be expected to track the project's progress and impact (ex. the amount of trash cleared or graffiti removed, the number of residents/volunteers participating in the project) with the progress sheet that is provided to them. How will your organization be sure that progress is properly recorded at every event and submitted to the Love Your Block team? **(5 points)**

- How will this project impact the surrounding neighborhood? **(5 points)**

E. Maintenance and Sustainability (45 points)

- Applicants are required to submit a maintenance plan to ensure long-term sustainability of the project.

Sustainability Objective	Sustainability Actions
What equipment and materials will be necessary to ensure the project's survival? (15 points)	
How will your group fund your projects after the Love Your Block grant is finished? (15 points)	
How will your group promote the project in years to follow? (10 points)	
How will your group continue to evaluate the project and share its success with the community? (5 points)	

B. Source of funds

List the source and amount of all matching funds and in-kind contributions being provided or potentially provided to support this project. Indicate what funds are currently in-hand, pledged, or pending. Fields may be left blank if unsure.

Funding Source	Amount	Cash or In-Kind	Status (Already have, Pledged, or Pending)
(ex. block club treasury)	10 shovels	In-Kind	Pledged

If additional funds have not been secured, what are your plans to secure these resources?

III. VOLUNTEER FORM

A minimum of 10 volunteers are required for the project proposal. If necessary, Love Your Block is able to provide volunteer recruitment assistance.

(Make copies if extra pages are needed)

Name (please print)	Hours	Phone #/E-mail	Signature

Total Sweat Equity Match (\$13.00/hour x # of persons): _____

Project Lead Signature: _____

IV. BUSINESS INFORMATION

The following section is for small, local businesses only. Other organizations, leave blank.

Business name: _____

Business location: _____

Which target area is your business located in?

- Broadway-Fillmore** **Kensington-Bailey** **Masten Park**
 Riverside **Upper West Side**

How many employees are employed at this business? _____

Does your business have any additional locations? If yes, how many? _____

Applicant affiliation with the business:

- Owner Employee Other

What is the home address of the business owner?

What is the amount of money that your business is able to provide for materials for this specific project? _____

How will this project decrease blight in the neighborhood that your business is located in?

Please list any community organizations (ex. Block Clubs, non-profits) that you will be partnering with.

Organization Name	Phone Number	Location	Brief description of partnership

For Office Use Only:

Target Area/Neighborhood: _____

Score #1 _____ Score #2 _____ Score #3 _____ Score #4 _____

Category: _____ Total Avg. Score: _____

Reviewed By _____

Committee Recommendation: Approved _____ Not Approved _____

Amount Awarded: \$ _____