A City of Pittsburgh Initiative servePGH

LOVE YOUR BLOCK

SPRING 2015 APPLICATION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Description of Program

The *Love Your Block* initiative invites organizations to submit project proposals that will transform their blocks with up to $1,000 and the support of City Departments. With these grant funds, winning groups can purchase supplies, engage their neighbors, and roll up their sleeves to transform their neighborhood – block by block! Projects may include, but are not limited to:

1. **Creating Green Spaces:** Community gardens, pocket parks, public spaces, or vacant lot clean ups
2. **Enhancing Parks:** painting structures, creating garden beds, picnic areas, shrub / flower planters
3. **Streetscaping:** Planting trees & flowers along curbs / entry-ways, sprucing up neighborhood signs
4. **Removing Graffiti and Litter:** Tire dumping, recycling waste, swapping graffiti for murals, etc.
5. **Sprucing up of Pathways:** Mulching / clearing overgrowth on trails, creating safe school "walking" bus routes

This City of Pittsburgh initiative was developed as part of servePGH, the City's high-impact service plan to engage citizen volunteers to tackle Pittsburgh's greatest challenges.

Important Dates:

February 20, 2015:	Application Deadline
March 11 2015:	Grantees Announced
April 2, 2015:	Mandatory Grantee Orientation
June 30, 2015:	Deadline for Project Completion

Sponsors:

PEOPLES PNC THE HOME DEPOT FOUNDATION

PROJECT GUIDELINES

Grant Eligibility Requirements

In order to qualify for the Love Your Block application process, each group must:

- **Be a qualified nonprofit organization or secure a fiscal agent** that is a qualified nonprofit.
  - *For the purposes of this grant, a qualified nonprofit organization is a corporation, group, or association that has a charitable and/or public purpose without a profit motive or shareholders (5013c tax status). If not a qualified nonprofit organization, your group must have a letter of support from the fiscal agent, which is a qualified nonprofit organization, included in the application. The fiscal agent will receive the funds and a representative of such entity will be the signatory to the mini-grant agreement with the City of Pittsburgh.*
- **Demonstrate the ability to mobilize a minimum of 20 neighborhood volunteers** to take part in the revitalization of their block during a volunteer event
- **Have at least two members who can serve as points of contact** and attend a grant orientation workshop with City of Pittsburgh representatives
- **Have a detailed and realistic action plan** for engaging residents to carry out a physical transformation of the community spaces on their block
- **Clearly identify the property on which the proposed project will take place**, if city property, provide lot and block number. If private property, secure the owner's written permission to carry out the project
- **Submit a detailed sustainability plan** outlining how your organization will sustain the project when grant funds are no longer available
- **Provide a reasonable budget and request amount**
- **Secure any and all necessary permits and/or City approvals for project work**
- **Complete a final written report summarizing the project** and its relevant measurements within 2 weeks of the event date.
- **Include one volunteer event date in your group's action plan between April 25 and June 30, 2015.** Also provide a rain date. These dates must be firm.
- **Soil testing** – depending on the roposed project plan, soil testing may be required.

Selection Process

All projects meeting the above criteria will be eligible for consideration; however, we will prioritize projects that:

- Work directly with a community group
- Demonstrate a concrete and sustainable solution to issues affecting your neighborhood
- Engage local residents as volunteers
- Leverage other partnerships and/or additional donations

Grant Reporting Requirements

After project completion, grantees will be asked to submit photos of the revitalized block, and a written report that includes quantative data such as the number of blocks impacted, number of lots revitalized, square feet of graffiti removed, pounds of litter collected, number of trees planted and number of green spaces or community gardens created as well as qualitative data to accompany it.

POST-GRANT CONTEST GUIDELINES

All selected grantee organizations that complete projects according to grant requirements are eligible to compete in a contest for the most impressive block transformation, for which the best block revitalization project will receive up to $2,000 in additional funding. In July of 2015, City staff will evaluate projects based on how well the grantee:

- Demonstrated a solution to an identified neighborhood challenge
  - Examples:
    - The space was transformed into an enjoyable gathering place for community members
    - The project addressed community concerns and issues of neighborhood sustainability
    - An entire block was impacted
- Engaged the community and involved neighborhood volunteers
  - Examples:
    - Many participants had meaningful participation at both the planning and implementation stages
    - Other neighborhood groups or institutions were involved
- Exhibited resourcefulness
  - Examples:
    - The group utilized available space and materials in creative ways
    - Additional donations and partnerships enhanced the project

In conducting the evaluation, staff will use:

- Grantees' written report form
- Before and after photos
- Visits to the project site *(as feasible)*

The $2,000 in additional funding must be spent on additional site improvements on the same block as the project and used within six months of being awarded the funds. Use of funds must be approved by the City; and receipt of contest award is contingent upon final execution of a separate grant agreement with the City of Pittsburgh and compliance with all Love Your Block requirements.

PROJECT APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Checklist

Please answer all of the following questions online or on a separate sheet of paper. Here is a checklist of necessary items:

- ☐ Completed Sections 1 & 2
- ☐ Action Plan, Budget Plan, and Maintenance/Sustainability Plan
- ☐ If applicable - Letter of permission from private property owner for neighborhood group to complete the Love Your Block project on their property
- ☐ At least 5 photos of your project site
- ☐ A letter of support from your fiscal agent (if not a qualified non-profit)
- ☐ Project Date and Rain Date

Submission

You may submit an application and required attachments in any of the following ways:

Online:	Electronic application at www.servepgh.pittsburghpa.gov/loveyourblock
E-Mail:	servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov
Fax:	412-255-6821
Mail:	Grants Office City of Pittsburgh c/o servePGH 414 Grant Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Please do not hesitate to call 412-255-2280 or email servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov with any questions.

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization Information	
Group Name:	Neighborhood(s) served:
Group Mailing Address, if applicable:	
Group Website, if applicable:	
Month/Year of Group's establishment:	
Is your group a nonprofit organization? If not, what is the name of your fiscal agent?	
Briefly describe your group's purpose, history and accomplishments:	

Primary Contact	
Name:	Email Address:
Home Address:	Phone:

Secondary Contact	
Name:	Email Address:
Home Address:	Phone:

SECTION 2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please provide your answers on separate pieces of paper or online

1. **Is this the first Love Your Block project your group is undertaking? If no, please explain, including dates and lots revitalized:**

2. **Please tell us about the location(s) of your project including its physical description, its surroundings, and if possible, its address. (*Note: Block/Lot numbers can be found at:* www2.county.allegheny.pa.us/RealEstate/Search.aspx):**

3. **Is your project site City property or private property? If private property, please explain how the public or neighborhood will benefit from the project and include a letter from the property owner offering permission for your group to complete your project if selected.**

4. **Is this site a demolition site? If yes, approximately how long ago was the building demolished, if known?**

5. **What neighborhood issue do you hope to address through Love Your Block?**

6. **Describe the project you propose to complete through Love Your Block and how it is a solution to the identified issue. Please include what impact it will have on the neighborhood and its physical appearance.**

7. **Please choose one volunteer event date between April 25 and June 30.**
   Note: This date must be firm. Please discuss with your organization before choosing.

8. **Please choose a rain date for your volunteer event day.**
   Note: This date must be firm. Please discuss with your organization before choosing.

9. **Have you reached out to any potential partners? If so, please list the names of partners and briefly describe their potential role(s). If not, please let us know any challenges you have had or might have in developing partnerships.**
   Note: Partnerships can involve local businesses, volunteer-led groups (including neighborhood organizations, school groups, and religious-based groups), nonprofits, and more.

10. **How will you engage local volunteers and/or reach out to your neighbors to involve them in any/all stages of the project?**

11. **How many volunteers do you anticipate?**
    Note: All grantees are required to mobilize at least 20 volunteers

12. **How many of those volunteers do you anticipate will live in the neighborhood of your proposed project?**

13. **How do you anticipate partnering with the City?**

Note: See list of City services. Please note that no services are guaranteed and availability is limited to projects on City property or in the public right of way.

City services available (*as feasible*)

- Provide trash collection services and litter cleanup supplies
- Clean City-owned vacant lots
- Prune overgrown City-owned trees
- Graffiti removal on City property
- Repair damaged/missing street signage
- Board up vacant, City-owned buildings
- Fill potholes
- Survey block for new tree planting opportunities on City-owned property or in the public right-of-way
- Prioritize demolitions
- Investigate building code violations

For questions 14, 15, and 16, please answer with the templates used in the examples

14. **Action Plan:** Please include a detailed action plan that indicates the various steps your group will take to carry out the block improvement project.

Example Action Plan

Action	Person(s) responsible for carrying out action	Date Action will take place	Intended outcome
Community outreach to inform residents of Love Your Block grant received	John Doe	Month/Day	Explaining project & identifying community leaders to take on specific responsibilities
Host Community Meeting	Jane Doe	Month/Day	Rallying community members behind project & making them aware of upcoming opportunity

15. **Budget Plan:** Please provide a budget that includes all planned expenses related to the project. Keep in mind the following requirements:

- Love Your Block grants includes up to $700 in cash (on a reimbursement basis), and $300 worth of Home Depot merchandise. Please indicate the source of each item.
- All Home Depot merchandise will be supplied by The Home Depot East Liberty located at 400 N Highland Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.
- Costs included in this budget should only consist of one-time expenses related to the project and/or items such as equipment or supplies.
- Love Your Block grants will not cover personal costs, such as food or travel.

- The City reserves the right to require a lease, rather than a purchase, of certain equipment, please explains how it will be used in the future.

Example Budget Plan

Item	Description of use	Source: Reimbursement or Home Depot	Cost
Planters and Window Boxes	To install on community building	Reimbursement	$400
Mulch	To placed in planters	Home Depot	$100
Perennials	To be planted	Home Depot	$200
Rain Barrel	To be placed with plants	Reimbursement	$300
Total:			$1,000

16. **Maintenance/Sustainability Plan:** Please explain how you plan to sustain your project long-term.

Example Maintenance Plan

Component/Method	Action Steps	Timeline
Identify garden advocate(s)	Recruit community volunteers with an interest in gardening to help maintain and monitor the community garden	Before project begins
Water the garden boxes	John Smith will water the plants	Weekly
Maintain green space around the garden	Neighborhood and garden volunteers under the direction of John Smith will cut and weed the grass (recruited in first step)	Weekly

17. **What additional resources do you anticipate leveraging?** (i.e. cash donations, other grants, flower donations, paint donations, etc.)

18. **What is the estimated dollar amount of all the leveraged resources combined?**

19. **Do you have any additional comments you would like to share?**