

Neighborhood Improvement Project

Request for Proposals (RFP)

SEPTEMBER 2023



Overview

Love Your Block is a City of Jackson program that offers mini-grants for residents and community groups to support projects that beautify and unite our neighborhoods, combat blight, and strengthen community pride.

The Love Your Block program is currently accepting proposals from businesses, non-profits, churches, and community groups for Neighborhood Improvement Projects. Successful proposals will include projects that will accomplish one or more of the following:

- Activate underutilized spaces
- Create community meeting and recreation spaces
- Beautify residential or commercial areas with public art
- Support neighborhood relationship building
- Celebrate culture and heritage
- Encourage volunteerism and community engagement

Neighborhood Improvement Project grantees will appoint a team and project lead, conduct community outreach to inform the public of their project, recruit volunteers from the neighborhood, plan their project timeline, purchase supplies, and organize a project workday(s) to complete the project.

Grantee teams will be awarded a grant of up to \$5,000 to support their project. While each grantee team will receive support and guidance from the Love Your Block program staff, grantee leads will be expected to take on the bulk of the project management for their individual project. Winning grantees will be announced in early November 2023, and projects will be expected to be completed by March 2024.



Eligibility

- Projects must be located within the boundaries of East Jackson, Midtown, or Downtown. Please see the boundary map on the main Love Your Block webpage for clarification.
- Project budgets must not exceed \$5,000 unless outside or matching funds have been secured by the project team at the time of application.
- Applicants must be representing a business, organization, or community group.
- Projects must benefit the entire surrounding neighborhood.
- Projects, once completed, must be accessible and open to anyone from the community.
- Projects must be able to be maintained by the applicant once completed if applicable.
- One-time projects must be completed by March 29, 2024. If your organization is applying for a project that will be a series of events or something similar, or if additional time is needed for a successful project, please let the LYB team know in your application.
- Events held for the public as projects must be free to attend. Any road closures needed will need to be approved and security must be present at any events with street closures.

Examples



Community Gardens



Street Art



Cultural Events



Signage



Block Parties



Murals



Vacant Lot Repurposing

FAQ

What if my project will cost more than \$5,000?

Project proposals that will cost more than the allotted grant of \$5,000 may be approved with confirmation that the grantee has secured matching funding or donations to cover the remaining cost. While the maximum awarded will be \$5,000, there is no minimum funding that can be applied for.

What if my project involves public art but I don't have a design or an artist?

If your project involves public art and you do not have a design confirmed, we ask that you submit all details about the concept of the design, including size, location, and theme. If you do not have an artist in mind for the art, the Love Your Block team will help match you up with a local artist. The grant (and/or matching funds) must cover both paying the artist and the supplies.

How will projects be chosen?

Once application submissions have closed, all eligible project submissions will be opened up to the public for voting. Voting will be available online and in-person at several locations. Applicants can absolutely and are encouraged to promote their project during the voting period and employees of organizations applying are allowed to vote.

How many projects will be selected?

Up to 5 projects will be selected and awarded a grant, pending funding requested.

Can my organization submit more than one proposal?

Yes, organizations may submit more than one project proposal, but only one project per organization will be awarded a grant. All submitted projects will go through public voting, and if multiple projects from one organization end up in the top 5 after the voting period has ended, the project from that organization with the most votes will be selected and the others will be removed.

FAQ

Can my project be a series of events?

Yes. Projects that include series events, such as a monthly movie night in a repurposed lot, are eligible and encouraged.

What can the grant money be spent on?

Grant money **can** be spent on items including, but not limited to, supplies to create your project, outreach materials, paying artists and creators for designs and labor, rental fees, fees or event insurance required to host an event, and refreshments for a public event.

Grant money **may not** be spent on items or services including, but not limited to, personal use, salary pay (to employees of the applying organization), alcoholic beverages, recognition dinners, awards, prizes, motor vehicles, surveillance equipment, weapons, speed bumps, street repair, rent or utilities, or any other purchases that do not directly support the project.

What kinds of creators can the money be used to pay?

Instructors, educators, artists, or any other specialty role needed to complete or organize the project. Individuals currently employed with the organization applying for the grant are NOT eligible to be paid from the grant funding.

Is money spent before the project is approved eligible for reimbursement?

No. Any funding spent before the announcement of winners and contracts are signed is not eligible for reimbursement.

If approved when can I start my project?

Winning grantees can begin working on their project the day after project approvals are announced.

Can my project be on public property?

Project proposals with locations on public property must be approved by several City departments prior to voting and will be judged on a case-by-case basis, such as City parks. The Love Your Block team will assist with requesting approvals needed.

FAQ

Does the project proposal have to be submitted by an organization?

Yes. Project proposals from individuals will not be accepted.

What kinds of organizations are eligible?

Non-profits, businesses, church and faith groups, neighborhood associations, HOAs, alumni groups, and other similar clubs and groups. If you have questions about whether or not your group is eligible, please email us at loveyourblock@jacksontn.gov.

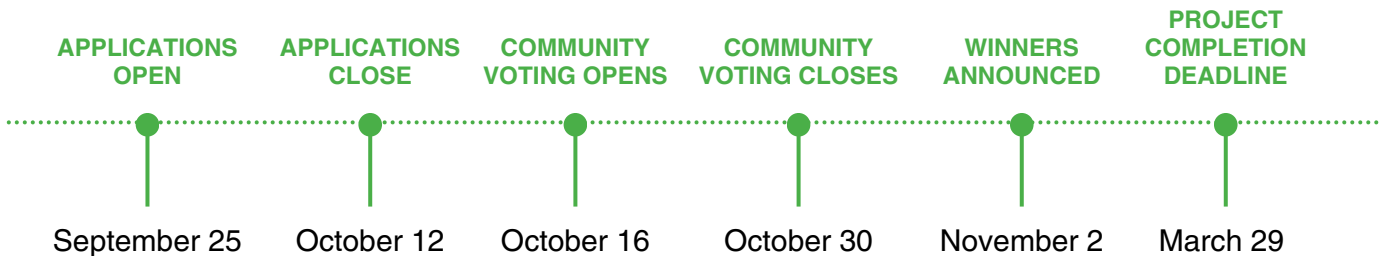
How will our organization receive the grant money?

Organizations can receive funding in one of two ways. The organization can purchase all needed supplies and turn in original receipts to receive a reimbursement, or the organization can create a supply/order list and send it to the Love Your Block team to be paid for.

Can more than one organization apply together?

Yes! Organizations are encouraged to work together on their community projects.

What is the timeline for projects once accepted?



Grantee Requirements

If awarded a grant, grantees agree to the following requirements:

1. Project leads must communicate estimated start date and timeline to the Love Your Block team and sign the grant contract within two weeks of notification of funding.
2. Grantees must begin community outreach to notify the public before beginning their project. This can include but is not limited to virtual and print flyers, media interviews, social media posts, and community meetings. Grantees must make all efforts to inform the public of their project and its availability to the community.
3. Grantees must collect metrics while planning and executing their project. This includes but is not limited to data on number and types of community outreach events as well as number of participants, number of attendants or volunteers at project events, square feet painted or decorated, square feet of area revitalized, etc. These metrics will be communicated to grantees by the Love Your Block staff at the time of contract signing.
4. Throughout the project implementation phase, project leads must communicate at least twice a month with the Love Your Block staff to provide updates on progress. This communication can include emails, video calls, in-person meetings, or reports and will be discussed at the time of contract signing.
5. Any challenges, issues, or changes involving the project should be addressed with the Love Your Block staff as soon as possible.
6. Social media posts about the project should tag the Love Your Block social media pages.
7. Reimbursements may take up to 30 days to process after receiving original receipts.

Proposed Budget for Project

This is an example of the budget you will be expected to submit for your project proposal application.

Line	Expenses	Projected Cost
1	Equipment: Rental fees for projector, fees for movie rental	\$ 100.00
2	Supplies and Materials: 2 tables, 8 chairs	\$ 400.00
3	Outreach and Print Materials: 250 flyers	\$ 200.00
4	Contract Services:	\$
5	Design and Artwork:	\$
TOTAL		\$ 700.00

Line	In-Kind	Amount
1		\$
2		\$
3		\$
TOTAL		\$