



**City of Buffalo  
MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN  
2010**

**LIVABLE COMMUNITIES BEAUTIFICATION GRANT**

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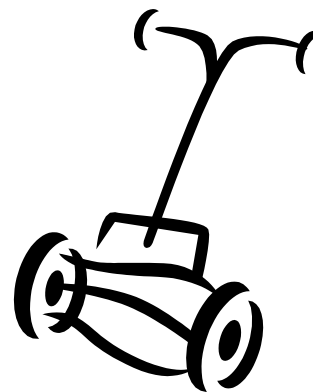
Community Painting/Mural Projects



Community Signage Projects



Community Garden Projects



Community Lot Maintenance Projects

The Livable Communities Initiative is funded by the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency and Citizens Bank Foundation

**City of Buffalo**  
**2010**  
**Livable Communities Beautification Grant Program**  
**Application Instructions and Guidelines**

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**PROGRAM PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Livable Communities Beautification Grant Program is to provide funding to block clubs and civic/citizens associations for the implementation of innovative projects that will provide measurable visual, physical, and environmental improvements in their neighborhoods and serves the purposes of historic preservation and neighborhood revitalization. These streetscape improvements will create a high quality and attractive environment throughout the project area that evokes a sense of pride, care and safety for people who live, work and visit in the area, in an effort to foster a sense of community based land stewardship. Funding for this initiative is provided by the City of Buffalo's Urban Renewal Agency and the Citizens Bank Foundation.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Any block club or civic/citizens association located in a low- to moderate-income area in the City of Buffalo, New York is eligible for funding.

- Priority will be given to grassroots, Community-Based Organizations (CBO) or block clubs whose mission is related to improving the city's neighborhoods.
- First preference will be given to projects located in one of the thirteen (13) targeted Livable Communities neighborhoods, the HOME Zone, and Mid-City NRSA Boundary areas.

**ELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

Projects must have a significant impact on the enhancement of the neighborhood, and must be available for use by the public without a fee. Grant funds may be used only for the implementation of visual and physical neighborhood improvement projects that fall within one of the three project categories listed below:

1. **Neighborhood Appearance, Beautification, and Aesthetics**

Examples: Landscaping and planting, community gardens (i.e. flower, vegetable, fruit, rain gardens, rock gardens), improvements to existing parks/structures, graffiti removal, development of parks and recreation, or historic preservation. Improvements to private residential properties are not eligible.

2. **Public Transportation**

Examples: Improve access to mass transit through development of pedestrian walkways, bus shelter improvements (i.e. benches, murals, and planters), signage (i.e. block club, neighborhood, and light post banners).

3. **Environmental/ Natural Resources**

Examples: Clean-up of the banks of streams/natural waterways that are part of a pocket park used primarily by neighborhood residents could qualify as part of a Neighborhood Clean-up Campaign. Environmental conservation and promotion of "green initiatives" (i.e. solar panels, sustainable gardens) are also eligible.

**INELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

- The primary purpose of the grant cannot be the advancement of any religious purpose. Projects must serve the secular purposes of historic preservation and neighborhood revitalization.
- Individuals, private businesses, public agencies, municipalities (i.e. city, state, federal), and schools (i.e. elementary, high school, universities and their programs, colleges) are NOT eligible to apply.
- Projects may not:
  - Duplicate an existing program or City services.
  - Be used to rehabilitate private properties, business, or schools.
  - Be used for infrastructure improvement: curbs, sidewalks or repaving of a street.
  - Be used for initial planning and/or concept design, however, construction drawings are considered a part of implementation.
  - Be used for purchase of holiday lights, decorations, T-Shirts, lawn mowers, power tools or improvement of private properties (i.e. lawn post)
  - Be used for soft projects such as social services, training, award ceremonies, and food or block club parties.
  - Be used for salaries, overhead, any indirect costs, or costs associated with fundraising.
  - Be used for the purchase of small tools and equipment, **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**
- Projects formerly funded through this grant program are **NOT** eligible for additional funding.
- New York State and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) conflict of interest provisions apply to Livable Communities Grant Program Funds. The applicant **MUST** disclose any actual or perceived conflict of interest.\*

\*These include relationships, both business and family, that any board member, staff member or volunteer of the applicant may have with City of Buffalo employees, commissioners, Buffalo Common Council members, and the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency, including its Board of Directors and staff. An application shall be subject to disqualification if such information has not been disclosed. An applicant is ineligible to apply for a Livable Communities Grant if financial benefit would accrue to any staff member, board member, advisory committee member or volunteer of the grantor or the grantee, including any member of their respective families.

### **GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Please note that notice of a City of Buffalo/Citizens Bank Livable Communities Award does not constitute final approval of the overall project. The award notice will be accompanied by contingencies that must be met before accessing funds, including signing a contract between your organization and the City of Buffalo and submittal of all required paperwork to meet grant guidelines. Organizations cannot access grant funds until all contingencies have been fulfilled.

- Match 100% of City of Buffalo/ Citizens Bank Grant Award with cash, in-kind donations, or volunteer hours. Dollar-to-dollar cash or in-kind **matching funds** are required (grant funds cannot be disbursed without the proof of receipt of matching funds). Volunteer commitment must be documented on a Sweat Equity form included in the application. After the volunteer hours have been fulfilled each volunteer signs a volunteer agreement stating they have completed their allotted of hours and on what days.
- **Applicants will be required to submit three uniform bids for the purchase of materials and/or services. Uniform bids require that vendors be given the exact same specifications for the materials and services being requested. The lowest of these three bids should be used when calculating the budget.**
- Original invoices are required for reimbursements. Faxes, photocopies, or scanned documents will not be accepted.

- Sign an agreement between grant recipient and the appropriate City of Buffalo department. This is required prior to implementation of the project. (The Division of Citizen Services will assist grantees with the coordination of agreements)

**APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

Under CDBG regulations, OSP staff will review each application to determine the project’s eligibility. To meet a low/mod area benefit, the project service area must be over 51% occupied by low to moderate income households. Based on planning standards, OSP is using ½ mile radius for the service area. Projects must be located in a low to moderate income area to qualify for funding. To determine if your project falls within an eligible area, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Mayor’s Call and Resolution Center by dialing 3-1-1 before submitting an application. ([See Attached Low-Mod Income Map](#))

A letter will be sent to each organization, advising them of approval or denial of the application. Upon receipt of a completed application, the Office of Strategic Planning may contact the applicant if any additional information is needed. Staff from the Division of Citizen Services and Office of Strategic Planning will review the applications with the Good Neighbors’ Planning Alliance in the area the project is being implemented and make recommendations to the Mayor for funding. The number of projects funded overall is determined by the amount of funding available, the amount of applications received and the amount requested by the applicants.

**TERMS**

Grants awarded by tiers ranging from \$100 - \$7,500. Please read the categories carefully to note eligibility requirements:

1. Any block club or civic/citizen association located within one of the **13 targeted Livable Communities** neighborhoods, plus the two additional zones: Black Rock, Broadway Fillmore, Cazenovia Park, Cold Spring, Grant Ferry, Lakeview, Leroy, Masten Park, Medical Park, Schiller Park, Seneca, Triangle, Hamlin Park, the HOME Zone, or the Mid-City NRSA Boundary areas is eligible to apply for funding ranging from \$500- \$7,500. ([See attached map](#)).
2. Any block club or civic/citizen association located **within** a low-to-moderate income area is eligible to apply for funding ranging from \$100- \$5,000. ([See attached low-mod income map](#))
3. Any block club or civic/citizens association located **outside** of a low-to-moderate income area is eligible to apply for funding ranging \$100- \$3,000.

Funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis, unless otherwise stated in the contract. Upon approval of a grant award, recipients are expected to adhere to the following conditions:

- Projects must be completed within **six months** of grant approval unless given a waiver/extension by the grantor, in which case the grantee must use the grant funds within a one year period.
- Funds are disbursed in installments during project implementation on a reimbursement basis.
- Requests for reimbursement must be placed on Office of Strategic Planning established forms and must be signed by two individuals representing the grantee.
- Grant funds may be used only for items included in the application.
- Unless an organization is a registered 501(c) 3, funds will be distributed to suppliers and/or subcontractors directly. **ALL VENDORS MUST BE PRE-APPROVED BY THE CITY AND ISSUED ID NUMBERS IN ORDER FOR REIMBURSEMENT CHECKS TO BE ISSUED.**
- Submit an expense report along with a final report upon completion of project.

**PROJECT ASSESSMENT AND FINAL REPORT**

The Division of Citizen Services will evaluate all funded projects. Project assessment will include, but is not limited to: photographs, as projects may be featured in a newsletter of feature projects, pre/post-project surveys, published articles and press coverage, detailed report documenting progress and challenges throughout the process, and review of project expenses. **If a project fails to submit a report and/or stay within stated guidelines, all remaining funds will be retracted and the organization will be disqualified from future funding.** Project organizers may submit articles detailing their completed project(s) for publication. All information will become the property of the City of Buffalo’s Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency. Final reports are available electronically online and must be completed and submitted by mail or email along with attachments on or before 4:30pm on Friday, October 29, 2010.

**GRANT APPLICATION WORKSHOP**

A technical assistance workshop sponsored by The Board of Block Clubs will be provided to those who are interested in applying for the Livable Communities grant. The workshop session will address how to complete the grant application, definition of the target areas, ideas for projects and volunteer assistance for projects to be completed in the community. All interested applicants may attend one of two workshops to be held on **Thursday, February 4, 2010 & February 10, 2010 from 6:00 PM-7:30 PM at the Belmont Shelter Center, 1195 Main Street, Buffalo, New York. (Parking available in the rear) Please note that completion of the workshop is not a prerequisite for consideration under this initiative.**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE**

APPLICATIONS OPEN:	Thursday, January 28, 2010
APPLICATIONS DEADLINE:	Wednesday, March 3, 2010*
RECIPIENTS NOTIFIED:	Monday, April 15, 2010
GRANT FUNDS ALLOCATED:	Thursday, April 29, 2010
SITE VISITS & MONTHLY REPORTS:	1 <sup>st</sup> of each month
UNVEILING CEREMONY:	August, 2010
FINAL REPORT & EXPENSE REPORT DEADLINE:	Friday, October 29, 2010

\* Applications must be type written, printed, and submitted by mail on or before 3/3/10. The accompanying documents must be postmarked 3/3/10. Both parts of the application need to be submitted by the dates above to be considered. *Late application submissions will not be considered.*

Applicants are required to submit **one original and two additional copies** of the application by **4:30 p.m.** on the due date. One of the three copies is placed in the applicant’s file. The two remaining copies will be reviewed for funding. Please consider the timeframe necessary for application processing when you plan your organization’s project. Mail applications to (incomplete submissions will NOT be considered):

**Mayor Byron W. Brown Livable Communities Grants**  
Division of Citizen Services  
65 Niagara Square, 218 City Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
Attention: Oswaldo Mestre, Jr. - Director