



**FY 2023-2025
LOVE YOUR BLOCK (LYB)
MINI-GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

All interested applicants should check the City of Richmond's Love Your Block website (www.richmondloveyourblock.org) to ensure that they receive any addendums to this RFA, e-mails, or special announcements.

Application is due on Friday, February 23, 2024 at 11:59 pm (NO EXCEPTIONS)

Materials must be submitted electronically on the Love Your Block website at:

www.richmondloveyourblock.org

**LOVE YOUR BLOCK MINI-GRANT
FY 2023-2025 MINI-GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

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LOVE YOUR BLOCK BACKGROUND

Since 2015, Love Your Block has awarded 57 mini-grants to volunteer-based projects in Richmond, led by your neighbors and local organizations. The **Love Your Block (LYB) Mini-Grant Program** is returning again, funded through a partnership between the Community Services Department and the City Manager's Office, Economic Development.

A resolution was approved by City Council on December 17, 2019, approving a solid waste Franchise Fee adjustment of a 7.5 percent increase to develop I Heart Richmond. The funding can be used for: 1) Compliance and enforcement of local and state solid waste reduction and recycling laws; 2) Prevention of litter and blight; and 3) Improving overall environmental quality and health.

LYB Mini-Grants will fund proposals that improve environmental quality by engaging community volunteers to clean-up and beautify Richmond.

GRANT GUIDELINE CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

The FY 2023-2025 Love Your Block Mini-Grant Guidelines have been modified to align with other City-administered grant programs as well as provide clarity regarding the application and administration process.

MINI-GRANT AWARD AMOUNTS

A total of \$80,000 is available for the FY2023-2025 mini-grant cycle. Grant awards can be up to \$10,000, and the number of grant awards available will be determined based on the amount of each award. There is no minimum grant award.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS INCLUDE:

- Organizations utilizing a non-profit fiscal sponsor
- Individuals utilizing a non-profit fiscal sponsor
- Non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax status

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS MUST ALSO MEET THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- Have an Active status in the [California Secretary of State Business Search](#)
- Have a Current status in the [California Department of Justice Registry of Charitable Trusts](#)
- Did not receive a Love Your Block Mini-Grant award during the previous (FY2022-2024) Love Your Block Mini-Grant cycle
- Be in good standing with the Love Your Block program
- Must not be a City of Richmond employee or elected official

FISCAL SPONSORSHIPS

What types of organizations should utilize a fiscal sponsor?

- An individual or non-governmental organization (sponsee) that does not have 501(c)(3) tax status must utilize a fiscal sponsor to apply for this grant. It is the sole responsibility of the sponsee to find an organization with 501(c)(3) tax status that is willing to serve as a fiscal sponsor.

What is fiscal sponsorship for the Love Your Block Mini-Grant?

- Fiscal sponsorship allows individuals and organizations without 501(c)(3) tax status to apply for the Love Your Block Mini-Grant.
- A fiscal sponsorship agreement should be entered into between the sponsee and an organization that has 501(c)(3) tax status.
- The fiscal sponsorship agreement allows the sponsee to raise tax-deductible contributions such as the Love Your Block Mini-Grant.
- Tax-deductible funds are given to the fiscal sponsor and restricted to the use of the sponsee.

How does a fiscal sponsorship work for the Love Your Block Mini-Grant process?

- The fiscal sponsor will serve as the applicant. Fiscal sponsors will enter into a grant services agreement with the City of Richmond and must meet all requirements and submit all required documents. The sponsee may serve as the project manager for the proposal.
- A signed agreement between the sponsee and fiscal sponsor must be included in the submitted application. The individual or organization actually implementing the program and performing the services will act as the sponsee or fiscal sponsor's sub-grantee.
- Fiscal sponsors can also separately apply for the Love Your Block Mini-Grant.
- In addition to requesting funds for its own purposes, organizations may also act as a fiscal agent for other organizations.

PROJECT AREA ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE PROJECT AREAS:

- Projects within the boundaries of City of Richmond
- Projects in areas that are accessible to the public
- Projects in areas that are viewable by the public

INELIGIBLE PROJECT AREAS:

- Projects in unincorporated areas
- Projects in areas that encroach on property of other public agencies, including but not limited to CalTrans and BART
 - Exceptions can be made if applicant submits a signed agreement with the agency with application

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:

- Primary purpose must be to improve environmental quality by engaging community volunteers to clean-up and beautify Richmond
- Must engage at least 10 community volunteers to clean-up and beautify Richmond
- Must include at least one (1) community clean-up and beautification event
- Must begin on or after July 1, 2024 and be completed by April 30, 2025
- Ongoing projects are eligible, but funds may not be used to reimburse expenses incurred prior to July 1, 2024

EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Community clean-ups that take place in the public right-of-way, such as trash pickup, weed/wildfire fuel abatement, and/or pruning
- Ongoing maintenance, revitalization, or expansion of a community garden on a vacant lot or City of Richmond park (including Richmond Greenway)
- Creation of a new community garden
- Public art projects that incorporate volunteers into the installation process
- Painting or graffiti abatement projects
- Ongoing maintenance, revitalization, or expansion of Little Free Libraries
- Installation of new Little Free Libraries
- Providing front yard (publicly viewable) projects to seniors and individuals with disabilities

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS:

- Projects that do not primarily aim to improve environmental quality by engaging community volunteers to clean-up and beautify Richmond
- Projects that do not engage at least 10 community volunteers to clean-up and beautify Richmond
- Projects that do not include at least one (1) community event during which physical clean-up and beautification occur
- Projects that begin before July 1, 2024 or end after April 30, 2025
- Semi-permanent and permanent projects that do not have a maintenance plan

EXAMPLES OF INELIGIBLE PROJECTS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Projects that primarily aim to provide literary arts or performing arts experiences. *Performing and literary artists are encouraged to participate in the Neighborhood Public Arts Mini-Grant Program administered by the [Arts and Culture Division](#).*
- Public mosaic and mural art projects that do not involve any community volunteers in the installation process. *Applicants interested in such projects are encouraged to participate in the Neighborhood Public Arts Mini-Grant Program administered by the [Arts and Culture Division](#).*
- Providing repairs and upgrades inside a senior's home
- Providing backyard (not publicly viewable) projects to seniors and individuals with disabilities at no cost
- Online anti-littering campaigns that do not also include volunteer-based community events

ELIGIBLE USES OF GRANT FUNDS

Grants will be awarded to eligible projects as described in PROJECT ELIGIBILITY, with

ELIGIBLE COSTS:

- Grant requests up to \$10,000
- Project supplies and materials such as:
 - Snacks, refreshments, and food for volunteer community clean-up and beautification events
 - Lumber, compost, seeds, seedlings, plants, stepping stones, hardware
 - Tools to be used for long-term maintenance. Applicants are encouraged to utilize the [Richmond Tool Library](#) for short-term or one-time projects.
 - Trash bags, gloves, safety vests
 - Paint, paint brushes, tarps
 - Flyers, banners, doorhangers, social media advertisements
 - Participant incentives such as t-shirts
- Certain permits and fees, such as:
 - Road closures
 - Traffic control
 - Temporary food event permits
 - Special event permit fees and park rental fees may be waived for grantees
- Insurance required to participate in the mini-grant program
- Fiscal sponsorship fees, if applicable – up to 10% of your grant request
- Administration fees for planning, managing, administering, and reporting on the mini-grant project – up to 10% of your grant request
- Professional and skilled direct services. Applicants are encouraged to leverage skilled volunteers to support their projects, but professional and skilled services may be hired for up to 30% of your grant request, eligible on a case-by-case basis. Examples include:
 - Artists
 - Landscaping company
 - Carpenters
 - Arborists

INELIGIBLE USES OF GRANT FUNDS

Grant funds may *not* be used for the following reasons:

- Ineligible projects
- Gift cards
- Stipends for volunteers
- Alcohol
- Snacks, refreshments, and food for project planning
- Fuel and mileage
- Repayment of existing debt or pre-existing tax liens or obligations
- Legal, loan, or bank fees
- Subsidization of existing contracts
- Political campaigns or lobbying
- Advancement of certain sectarian, politically partisan, or religious projects (grant funds should be used for specific programs and not to advance the causes of any of the stated groups)
- Fundraisers or other events not open to the general public
- A project or program which is clearly intended for commercial gain
- A project or program that occurs before or after the grant award period
- Support of individuals
- For businesses established for personal benefit or profit
- To support annual fund drives
- To fund an agency's deficit or endowment
- To repay loans
- Indoor furniture. Certain outdoor furniture, such as picnic benches, to be used to enhance or create publicly accessible spaces may be eligible.
- Cell phones
- Bonuses
- For the direct support of religious activities. Secular activities offered to the Richmond community that is provided by religious organizations regardless of congregational membership or statements of belief may be eligible for grant funds.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Love Your Block Mini-Grant Application is available online at www.richmondloveyourblock.org.

Application packages must be submitted electronically through the online application portal at www.richmondloveyourblock.org by 11:59 pm on Friday, February 23, 2024. E-mailed, mailed, faxed, or in-person applications will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted in a readable PDF or Word format (scanned files are not accepted), and budget proposals must be submitted in Excel format. Supplemental files may be submitted in non-readable formats.

The following materials must be submitted as part of a completed application package **by 11:59 pm on Friday, February 23, 2024** to be considered for funding (feel free to use this section as a checklist):

- Completed application (all sections completed and questions answered) in readable PDF or Word format
- Completed budget proposal in Excel format
- Project site photo
- Proof of 501(c)3 status (Non-Profit Status Determination letter from the IRS)*
- [City of Richmond W-9 form](#)*, if applicant does not have an active vendor number
- [Vendor Supplemental Questionnaire](#)*, if applicant does not have an active vendor number
- Signed Letter of Permission from property owner, if proposal takes place on private property
 - Exception to this can be made for projects such as senior front yard assistance that will involve outreach and identification of seniors in need. If the property owners have not been identified, applicants may submit an outreach letter template and describe how the outreach will be conducted.
- Signed agreement with a public agency, if proposal encroaches on non-City public property
- Signed agreement between the organization and the fiscal sponsor, if applicable

ITEMS MARKED WITH AN * MUST BE COMPLETED BY YOUR FISCAL SPONSOR IF YOU ARE USING ONE.

Note: City staff will confirm that the organization has filed the required document(s) in California and is authorized to carry out its business activities (California Secretary of State - <https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business> and California Department of Justice - <https://rct.doj.ca.gov/Verification/Web/Search.aspx?facility=Y>). Applications submitted by organizations not identified with “active” and “current” statuses may be disqualified.

Application packages that fail to include these documents or fail to meet eligibility requirements will be disqualified.

PAYMENT PROVISIONS

An initial advance payment of ninety percent (90%) of the total award amount will be advanced to all grantees in June and July 2024. The remaining ten percent (10%) will be reserved until the completion of the grant program, submission of a complete final report package, and approval of the final report package by City staff.

Unspent grant funds and funds used for ineligible costs must be returned to the City.

APPLICATION REVIEW & SCORING

The selection process is as follows:

1. City staff review applications for satisfaction of application and eligibility requirements. **Only** complete and eligible applications proceed to the next step.
2. Complete and eligible applications are forwarded to a review committee. The review committee consists of community volunteers. Applications will be evaluated and scored using the criteria listed below:

Proposed Project (Total: 10 Pts)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project will physically clean-up/beautify Richmond• Primary purpose of the project is to improve environmental quality by engaging community volunteers to clean-up and beautify Richmond• Clear description of proposed project• Includes community events for physical clean-up and beautification by volunteers• Project can realistically be completed by April 30, 2025
Neighborhood Engagement (Total: 10 Pts)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Realistic metric goals• Clear plan to recruit at least 10 volunteers to clean-up and beautify Richmond• Clear plan to involve residents, community members, organizations, and/or businesses that live in or frequent the project area• Utilizes a variety of community outreach methods• Has received or will seek community input on elements of the project
Proposed Budget (Total: 10 Pts)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget items correspond to project proposal• Budget is cost effective and reasonable for the project
BONUS: Project Site (Total: 2 Pts)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project will take place in a City of Richmond park, including Richmond Greenway

3. Application scores will be averaged across review committee members. Funding is awarded based on the highest average scores. Proposals will be fully funded unless there is insufficient funding for the lowest-scoring awarded proposal, in which case partial funding will be awarded.

All scores are final. There is no grievance process.

GRANT REQUIREMENTS

If you are selected to receive a mini-grant, you will be required to:

- Sign and submit a Grant Award Agreement** by April 19, 2024 outlining terms and conditions of accepting the grant, which will include, but is not limited to:
 - Attending a grantee orientation in June 2024.
 - Taking and submitting before, during, and after photos of the project.
 - Having all volunteers participating in the project sign the City of Richmond Liability and Waiver and providing the same to City of Richmond in the final report package.
 - Obtaining additional approvals and/or permits from City departments, commissions, or City Council as necessary.
 - Maintaining records to show and account for use of grant funds, and submitting copies of all receipts, checks, or other payments made with the grant funds in the final report. Detailed requirements for payment records are included in the final budget report.
 - Tagging City of Richmond social media accounts in social media content.
 - Acknowledging the City of Richmond in all content using provided logos and mentioning City of Richmond in all media contacts associated with the project.
 - Submitting a comprehensive final report package about your project that will include a questionnaire, metrics report, budget report, copies of all receipts, copies of all signed waivers, photos, and outreach materials.
- Provide proof of insurance as outlined in [City of Richmond Insurance Requirements](#) by April 19, 2024. Fiscal sponsors must have insurance that covers all actions of the sponsored organization/individual.
- Obtain a City of Richmond business license by April 19, 2024 if your mini-grant award is ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00), or if your entity makes more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) within the City of Richmond during the fiscal year.

****If you are an organization utilizing a fiscal sponsor, your fiscal sponsor must sign the Grant Award Agreement, obtain a business license if applicable, and provide proof of insurance by these dates.**

APPROVAL AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Projects that include long-term or permanent improvements to City property may require the applicant to complete any or all of the following: submit and receive an approved Adopt-a-Spot Application; present to and receive approval from the Recreation and Parks Commission; and present to and receive approval from other City departments, commissions, or Richmond City Council.

Projects that include public art on City property only may be required to adhere to Public Art Policies in the City and present the concept design to the Public Arts Advisory Committee and/or Richmond Arts & Culture Commission for approval prior to installation.

Most organized volunteer events will require a Special Event Permit. Most organized volunteer events taking place in City parks will require a Special Event Permit and Park Rental. Permit application and rental fees may be waived for grantees.

Approvals and permits add considerable time to your project. Applicants are advised to contact Love Your Block before application submission to review the scope and any approval/permit requirements.

IMPORTANT DATES

IMPORTANT: PLEASE NOTE TIMEFRAMES FOR RECEIPT OF DOCUMENTS. FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THESE DEADLINES WILL RESULT IN FORFEITURE OF YOUR MINI-GRANT. ITEMS MARKED WITH AN * MUST BE SUBMITTED BY OR ON BEHALF OF YOUR FISCAL SPONSOR IF YOU ARE USING ONE.

Application Release Date	Wednesday	January 10, 2024
Deadline – Application, Budget Proposal, Site Photo, Proof of 501(c)3 Status*, W-9 Form*, Vendor Supplemental Questionnaire*, Signed Letter of Permission from Property Owner, Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement*	11:59 pm, Friday	February 23, 2024
E-mail Award Notification to Mini-Grantees	Wednesday	March 20, 2024
Deadline - Verbal/Written Acceptance of Mini-Grant	Wednesday	March 27, 2024
Mini-Grant Award Agreements, Requests for Business Licenses and Insurance Distributed to Mini-Grantees	Beginning of	April 2024
Deadline - Signed Mini-Grant Award Agreement*, Business License*, and Insurance*	Friday	April 19, 2024
Public Announcement of Mini-Grantees		June 2024
Mandatory Grantee Orientation		June 2024
Mini-Grant Funds (90%) Disbursed		June/July 2024
Mini-Grant Term Begins/Activities and Expenditures Begin	Monday	July 1, 2024
Mini-Grant Activities and Expenditures End	Wednesday	April 30, 2025
Deadline – Completed Final Report Package	Saturday	May 31, 2025
Mini-Grant Funds (10%) Disbursed		June/July 2025

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Background Checks: Organizations that provide services to youth or other vulnerable populations (elderly, people with disabilities, etc.) must require comprehensive background checks and fingerprinting of all employees and/or volunteers that work directly with youth or such other vulnerable populations.

Limitations: All facts and opinions stated herein are based upon available information and no representations or warranties are made with respect to their accuracy or completeness.

The application and the selection process shall in no way be deemed to create a binding contract, agreement, or offer of any kind between the City and the applicant organization. If the City selects a grantee pursuant to this RFA, any legal rights and obligations between the successful applicant, if any, and the City will come into existence only when a grant agreement is fully executed by the parties, and the legal rights and obligations of each party shall at that time be only those rights and obligations which are set forth in the grant agreement and any other documents specifically referred to in that grant agreement.

Each organization submitting applications in response to this RFA agrees that the preparation of all materials for submittal to the City are at the organization’s sole cost and expense, and the City shall not, under any circumstances, be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by any candidate. In addition, each organization agrees that all documentation and materials submitted in response to this RFA shall remain the property of the City and may be used by the City for any reason whatsoever. In

accordance with California law relating to access to public records, the City may be required to publicly disclose all submitted information and materials to third parties requesting such information.

Award: The City reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications, to alter the selection process in any way, to postpone the selection process for its own convenience at any time for any reason whatsoever, to waive any defects in any application, to issue a new RFA at any time, or to provide a grant to any organization it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion within or outside of the RFA evaluation process. City reserves the right to terminate a grant agreement within ten (10) days without cause. All materials submitted become the property of the City and will not be returned. Funds awarded are public funds and any information submitted or generated is subject to public disclosure requirements, including the Public Records Act.

Federal, State and Local Laws: As part of the RFA process, the selected grantee will be required to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, including the City of Richmond's Nondiscrimination Ordinance (Chapter 2.28), Business Opportunity Ordinance (Chapter 2.50), Local Employment Program Ordinance (Chapter 2.56), and Living Wage Ordinance (Chapter 2.60), if applicable. Please contact the City Attorney's office for further information regarding the above requirements.

APPLICATION ASSISTANCE AND QUESTIONS

For inquiries or clarification regarding this program or application, please contact Love Your Block, Community Services Department, Recreation Division at volunteer@ci.richmond.ca.us or 510-620-6563.

Office hours are highly recommended to assist you with your application. Love Your Block staff can review your application, budget, and documents to ensure they pass the eligibility phase. Applicants are encouraged to visit the [Love Your Block website](http://www.richmondloveyourblock.org) at www.richmondloveyourblock.org to self-schedule office hours with Love Your Block staff.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) will also be posted to the [Love Your Block website](http://www.richmondloveyourblock.org) on a rolling basis.