



City of Lima
Neighborhood Sustainability Mini-Grant Program
(provided through CDBG funds)

2016 Grant Guidelines

The current round of the Mini-Grant Program will support programs and activities that strengthen your neighborhood associations' structure (board /officers. record keeping, financial & legal records) organizational skills (meeting agendas/ minutes/ effective committees/goals & objectives/technology skills) and sustainability (recruitment & retention of members/ financial support/ resources). The goal of the mini-grant program is to increase the Neighborhood Associations' ability to operate in an effective, accountable and sustainable manner. All LACNIP affiliated associations (within the city limits) that are in good standing are eligible to receive a mini-grant, regardless of the association's size or budget.

Please read through the grant guidelines and tips for a successful proposal carefully, and contact the Neighborhood Specialist with any questions.

Mini-grant awards will not exceed \$500. Applicants agree that to be eligible, they must have filed an annual report for 2016 with the Neighborhood Support office, (The report covers the year of 2015 but is filed in 2016, and are able to match the amount requested. (match can include cash, in-kind and volunteer service)

Application Procedures

A completed application will consist of three (3) copies of the completed application materials:

- **Cover Page**
- **Project description (limit 2 pages)** *Depending on the scope of your project, your description may be shorter, but please do not exceed the 2-page limit*
- **Budget Detail**

These materials are included with this mailing to LACNIP affiliated neighborhood associations and are also available to **view and print from the City of Lima website at www.cityhall.lima.oh.us**

Applications must be postmarked by August 30, 2016. All funds must be spent by September 30, 2017.

Applications should be sent to:

City of Lima
Neighborhood Support Mini-Grant
50 Town Square
Lima, Oh 45801

All applicants will receive notification of decisions by Sept. 15, 2016. Successful applicants may begin grant-funded activities upon notification. A **one-page final report** that describes the activities and outcomes of the project is required and must include a detailed summary of project expenses. **The report is due on or before December 15, 2017.** (Successful applicants will receive a final report form with their notification letter. Please save and return this form to the Neighborhood Support address above upon completion of the project.)

Examples of eligible project activities/expenses include:

- **All activities must be CDBG eligible**
- Fees and/or travel expenses to attend workshops that build skills and knowledge of volunteers in organizational development, management, program development and technology (computer related programs, etc)
- Purchase of equipment such as computers, printers, copiers, digital cameras, etc. to assist with documentation, budgeting, evaluation and reporting.
- Purchase of computer software (Word, Excel, Power Point, Quick Books, etc) to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the association
- Purchase of supplies such as binders, folders, storage boxes or shelves for proper storage and record-keeping
- Costs for association promotional materials such as brochures, website development and other types of publicity to help increase membership and generate income from sponsors
- Costs for materials associated with fund-raising for the association

The examples of eligible projects and expenses listed above are meant to provide ideas and guidance. If your association is considering a project that fits the focus of this mini-grant program, but is not listed above, please contact the Neighborhood Specialist to discuss the project.

If you have submitted an unsuccessful application (s) in previous years and would like feedback on how to improve your proposal, please contact the Neighborhood Specialist.

Examples of ineligible project activities/expenses:

- Projects with no connection to increasing the organization, effectiveness or sustainability of neighborhood associations
- Capital (building) projects – construction of storage areas, ramps, building repairs or improvements
- Costs for food/beverages/ alcohol

Budget Information

Proposals that involve raising new funds (through special member donations, fundraisers, or a gift/grant from a local business, etc.) are more competitive during the selection process than projects that use existing funds (bank account funds, membership dues, etc.) Use your mini-grant application as a way to help leverage new funds for your association, either through members, donors, local businesses, or other sources.

Neighborhood Specialist

Connie Dershem

419-221-5177

connie.dershem@cityhall.lima.oh.us

Tips for Successful Proposals

- **Read the directions and guidelines carefully.**
- **Contact the Neighborhood Specialist** with questions or to have a review of your proposal in advance. (This does not guarantee that you will receive a grant, but may help you to identify problems or provide suggestions to improve your application.)
- **Follow the application directions** – for example, if asked to provide 3 copies, please provide 3 copies! Incomplete or late applications will be disqualified.
- If you have consulted a professional for guidance and advice on how to plan and implement your project, share that information in the description of your project.
- **Provide enough description** of the project so that it will be understandable to someone who is *not* familiar with your association or the background of the project you're proposing. If you do not provide enough background information, your grant application may not be as competitive. (On the other hand, be careful not to exceed the page limit indicated in the guidelines!)
- **Provide enough detail on your budget:** how much does each item cost? What is the total amount you are requesting? Be sure to add up the total amount requested, as well as any matching fund amount you may use. Otherwise we won't know how much money you are requesting and your application may be disqualified!
- **Matching funds:** For example, if the project/ activity you want to do will cost \$500, you will need to match \$500. Explain how your association will provide the match (cash, in-kind, volunteer service.) Ideally, the match should come from all three sources. The value of the In-kind donation is set by the donor. The value for volunteer service is calculated at \$21.46 per hour.
- Organizations planning to **raise new funds** (through member donations, fundraisers, or a gift/grant from a local business, etc.) are more competitive than organizations who designate funds from existing sources (bank account, membership dues, etc.) Contact the Neighborhood Specialist if you have questions about any matching funds portion of your grant application.
- Use your mini-grant application as **leverage to raise new funds** in the community, either with members, donors, local businesses, etc.
- **We can only award 10 mini-grants each year** and there are many good projects, so some may not be funded. **If your project is not funded, please consider re-submitting your application or a new project next year!**

Remember to include three (3) copies of your grant application materials. Failure to do so will result in the disqualification of your application!

City of Lima Neighborhood Sustainability Mini-Grant Program 2016

1. Application Materials – Cover Sheet

Name of Association _____

Federal Identification Number (FEIN) _____

Contact Person _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

- a. Is this association an affiliate of LACNIP? Yes ____ No ____
(association must be an affiliate of LACNIP to be eligible to apply for a mini-grant)
- b. Is your association current in filing an annual report to LACNIP? Yes ____ No ____
(association must have filed an annual report covering 2015 – filed in 2016 - in order to apply for a mini-grant)
- c. Did this association receive a mini-grant in 2015? Yes ____ No ____
(preference may be given to associations who have not previously or recently received an award)

A complete application consists of three (3) copies of:

1. Cover sheet (this sheet)

2. Project Description (1-2 page description of proposed project/activities)

On a separate sheet, please describe the project that funds will support, if received. In 1 -2 pages, describe the background and need for the project, the steps involved in planning and completing the project, and any other information that is important. Describe how the project will help your association meet its mission and improve its effectiveness. Be sure to include a brief section on how matching funds (if used) will be raised. (see “tips for successful proposals” and check online for sample proposals for additional guidance.)

3. Budget detail and total amount of funds requested

On a separate sheet, please provide a list of expenditures, including the equipment, supplies, etc. that you expect to purchase with the grant funds. List the cost or estimated cost of expenditures for the entire project and include the **total amount** you are requesting, up to \$500. (see “tips for successful proposals” and check online for sample proposals for additional guidance.)

Remember to include three (3) copies of your grant application materials. Failure to do so will result in the disqualification of your application!