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NYC SERVICE AND CITIZENS COMMITTEE LAUNCH THE “LOVE YOUR BLOCK” APPLICATION TO SUPPORT COMMUNITIES MAKING LOCAL CHANGE

The “Love Your Block” Program will award 25 community groups with a grant, City services, and project support to improve their neighborhood

NEW YORK— NYC Service and Citizens Committee for New York City launched the 2019 *Love Your Block* application to support residents in transforming public spaces and engaging neighborhood volunteers to make local change. Twenty-five community groups will be selected as *Love Your Block* winners and rewarded a \$1,000 grant, project management support, and City agency services to improve their neighborhood. The application will remain open through Wednesday, November 7th.

NYC Service and Citizens Committee for New York City encourage resident-led volunteer groups to submit project proposals that engage local volunteers to address community concerns. Successful applications highlight how the project will transform public spaces, like City blocks or community gardens, and engage residents to be change makers in their neighborhoods. Successful proposals will also utilize City services to address important community concerns and contribute to building stronger communities by engaging neighbors to work together toward sustainable improvements. The 2019 *Love Your Block* application can be found at nyc.gov/loveyourblock.

“*Love Your Block* is about partnering with residents and giving them the support and resources to become neighborhood change agents,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Building a healthier democracy means engaging our residents in opportunities to make a difference in the life of their community, so I encourage every resident-led group to apply and propose community solutions that will help us continue to build thriving neighborhoods.”

“NYC Service believes that volunteerism is a catalyst for civic engagement in New York City,” said **NYC Chief Service Officer Paula Gavin**. “*Love Your Block* supports residents to engage their neighbors and address local needs through service. Over the last ten years, the program has helped over 260 resident groups improve over 400 public spaces and City blocks. NYC Service

is proud to continue *Love Your Block* with Citizens Committee and our sister agencies to inspire and empower 8.6 million New Yorkers to come together and serve each other.”

“There are more than 60,000 blocks in our City. While Citizens Committee for New York City’s, *Love Your Block* focuses on only a very few, it should serve as a model for every New Yorker on every block to get to know your neighbors and to join them in making your block the envy of every New Yorker,” said **Citizen’s Committee for NYC Executive Director Peter Kostmayer**.

In addition to a \$1,000 grant and project planning assistance, *Love Your Block* winners will receive city services from the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Sanitation, and the Department of Transportation. City agency services include; pest control and removal; tree stewardship workshops; graffiti removal; repair of and installation of street signs and street lights; traffic safety surveys; and installation of bicycle racks, speed bumps, and more.

NYC Service and Citizens Committee for New York City encourage resident-led volunteer groups across all five boroughs to apply for a *Love Your Block* Grant by November 7th. Visit nyc.gov/loveyourblock for more information. Interested participants may also attend a *Love Your Block* Information Session on October 16th or October 23rd from 6:00 - 7:30pm. Contact MGonzalez@citizensnyc.org or call (212) 822-9579 for more information and to RSVP.

Love Your Block applications will be evaluated on the following:

- Groups must be volunteer-led, without paid staff and must demonstrate the ability to mobilize a minimum of 20 volunteers
- Groups must work with two (2) out of the four (4) City agency partners for services
- Projects must help address a shared community need (*e.g.* Tree planting, graffiti removal, speed bumps)

“The *Love Your Block* program is a great way to support innovative community-based projects proposed by residents that protect the environment and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods on a block by block scale,” said **Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**. “DEP is proud to partner with NYC Service, Citizens Committee for NYC, and community groups from all five boroughs on the *Love Your Block* program.”

“As the steward of more than 30,000 acres of public land, we value the contributions of volunteers who work to move our system forward,” said **NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP**. “Through initiatives like *Love Your Block*, citizens are encouraged to help maintain and sustain thriving green spaces that all New Yorkers can enjoy. In the 10 years since its inception, this program has spread love through our streets, our communities, and our hearts.”

“Residents are our best partners in keeping New York City healthy and clean,” said **Department of Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**. “They have valuable insights, knowledge and strong community relationships, which is why we encourage resident-led volunteer groups to put their best ideas forward and apply to the *Love Your Block* initiative. *Love Your Block* provides residents with the opportunity and resources to beautify their neighborhood, initiate progress, and

take pride in their communities. We are proud to continue being part of this important initiative that is helping keep our city neighborhoods healthy and clean.”

“*Love Your Block* is an exciting initiative that has borne out community-driven ventures that have made a lasting impact on many of Brooklyn’s diverse communities,” said **Borough President Eric Adams**. “I applaud NYC Service for continuing to lead this effort that empowers individuals and organizations to make a tangible difference in their communities through grassroots-led, small-scale projects. I encourage Brooklynites to get involved and apply for one of these grants so that our communities are improved for future generations.”

“Civic activism is a hallmark of life in Queens and across the five boroughs,” said **Borough President Melinda Katz**. “New York City is at its best when citizens take the lead in their communities, and the resources available through the *Love Your Block* initiative will go a long way toward helping residents make their neighborhoods better places to live.”

“I am happy to see initiatives like *Love Your Block* and encourage Staten Islanders to get involved,” said **Borough President James Oddo**. “Community members who feel a genuine call to action to make New York City safer and cleaner should consider applying to this program.”

“We have many vibrant and exciting neighborhoods in South Brooklyn including Sunset Park, Red Hook and Bay Ridge,” said **Assistant Speaker Felix W. Ortiz**. “I urge community groups and block associations to apply to the *Love Your Block* program to help improve our neighborhoods. These grants can go a long way improving the way we live.”

“Thank you NYC Service and Citizens Committee of New York City for the *Love Your Block* grant,” said **NYS Assembly Member Rebecca A. Seawright**. “I encourage my constituents who are leaders of Upper East Side and Roosevelt Island community organizations to apply and continue to build upon their successes by engaging and empowering neighbors with vital resources and services.”

“To care for one’s block, ones community; speaks volumes about the devotion our neighborhoods showcase for their communities,” said **NYS Assembly Member Jaime Williams**. “The *Love Your Block* grant is a marvelous program that will not only foster dedication amongst residents, but help further long standing principles of community partnership.”

“Volunteers are the heart and soul of our communities, giving up their own personal time and effort in order to make their neighborhood special,” said **NYS Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz**. “When we talk about civic engagement, it cannot start and finish on Election Day but rather must be persistent and long-lasting. I am excited about *Love Your Block* and the \$1,000 grants from NYC Service and Citizens Committee that will go directly to residents who are taking the initiative to transform public spaces and engage their neighbors. I strongly urge anyone who has a vision for their neighborhood to apply for this grant program before the deadline on November 7.”

NYC Service

NYC Service is a division of the Office of the Mayor which promotes volunteerism, engages New Yorkers in service, builds volunteer capacity and mobilizes the power of volunteers and national service members to impact New York City's greatest needs. The vision is to inspire and empower all New Yorkers to serve their City and each other through New York City's nonprofits, businesses, and city agencies. For more information and to find an opportunity to [#ServeNYC](#), visit nyc.gov/service.

Citizens Committee for New York City

Citizens Committee for New York City's mission is simple: to help New Yorkers – especially those in low-income areas – come together and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Residents are uniquely situated to define and act on the issues affecting their communities. When provided with modest support, neighborhood and school groups can effectively mobilize community resources to improve quality of life. Citizens Committee for New York City supports these grassroots efforts by offering grants, skills-building workshops and further technical support in the form of project planning assistance and an equipment share library. In 2017, we provided 450 projects with \$1.9 million in grants and services, and our staff facilitated 68 workshops to close to 700 social entrepreneurs. Since 1975, we have promoted the spirit of volunteerism, local engagement and social justice that drives our work. Visit us online at <http://www.citizensnyc.org>.

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