



FY2016-2017

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

APPLICATION PACKAGE
For
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION
FUNDING

Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates

Neighborhood Development Grants

The Neighborhood Development Grant Program provides grants to undertake projects ranging from \$250 to \$20,000. In the past, these grants have been used for a variety of projects from housing rehabilitation and lead paint abatement to the purchase and installation of period street lighting and street trees. Neighborhood groups are encouraged to apply for grants to fund projects that advance the city's neighborhood plan for your neighborhood and/or the city's *2001-2020 Vision* Comprehensive plan. Neighborhood Development Grants can also be used as a match or leverage for even larger projects funded by foundations and/or businesses. Projects must be supported by the membership of the neighborhood organization and not just the neighborhood leader. The most successful projects may require many volunteer hours to see the goals achieved.

PREPARATION AND TRAINING: An informational session on the FY 2016-2017 Neighborhood Development Grant Program will be held on Thursday November 19, 2015 from 6-8 p.m. at the Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue SW for any neighborhood organization planning on participating in the program.

Attendance at this informational session is not required in order to participate in the Neighborhood Development Grant Program. However, applicants are responsible for carefully reading and understanding the program's participation criteria. As such, it is strongly recommended applicants attend this session if your neighborhood organization is interested in competing for FY2016-2017 grant funding.

Copies of the FY2016-2017 Neighborhood Development Grant Application package will be distributed during this session. If a neighborhood organization is unable to send a representative to this meeting, grant application packages will be available at the Office of Neighborhood Services, Room 312 North in the Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building and/or online the following day. Assistance in completing the application is available by calling the Office of Neighborhood Services at 540-853-5210, by email to neighborhoods@roanokeva.gov, or by contacting any RNA member by visiting www.roanokeva.gov/rna.

Application Requirements

APPLICATION DUE DATE: Applications are due in the Neighborhood Services office, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, Room 312 North, 215 Church Avenue SW, Roanoke, VA 24011 by **5:00 p.m. on or before Friday, January 15, 2016.**

SUBMIT A SEPARATE APPLICATION FOR EACH PROJECT: If a group wishes to apply for funding for more than one unrelated project (i.e. a neighborhood sign and to attend VA Statewide Neighborhood Conference), a separate application must be submitted for each project as each application is considered separately during the review process. In addition, each application must be accompanied by a copy of your **organization's bylaws** along with copies of the **Treasurer's Report** and **Meeting Minutes** from your organization's most recent past two (2) meetings. Organizations without bylaws are only eligible to receive a maximum of \$500.00. **Submit one (1) original plus five (5) copies of the completed application form with attachments for each project OR you can submit your completed application with attachments ONLINE OR electronically by scanning them into a single document and emailing to neighborhoods@roanokeva.gov.**

APPLICATION SHOULD BE TYPED OR PRINTED LEGIBLY: The application should be typed or hand-printed legibly with each question answered thoroughly.

INVOLVEMENT OF OTHERS OUTSIDE THE NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: A project that requires involvement of city departments **must be pre-approved in writing by the affected department and submitted with the application.** Example: If you want a sign to be placed on city right-of-way, the placement and signage size must be pre-approved by Public Works and the application should include an official signed letter of approval from that department. Applications submitted without written approval will be considered incomplete and deemed ineligible for funding.

COMPETITIVE QUOTES NEEDED: If the grant funding will be used to pay for vendor services, the application **must include at least three (3) written quotes from eligible vendors,** or an explanation of why the quotes are not available at the time of the application (i.e. there are not three vendors available to do the work). Applications submitted without quotes will be considered incomplete and deemed ineligible for funding.

DETAILS NEEDED FOR CONFERENCE TRAINING GRANTS: In order for a neighborhood group to qualify for grant funding to attend conferences and/or training, the group must propose a project and submit a written plan that will assist in implementing their neighborhood plan's recommended actions or policies from the information gained at the conference. This project may be for the entire neighborhood or for a specific activity or facet of the neighborhood (e.g. streetscape improvement, crime prevention, etc.). In addition, the application must indicate the person's name who will be attending the conference, the topics of interest to be learned from attending the conference (i.e. crime, code enforcement), and the applicability of these topics toward implementing the group's neighborhood plan's recommended policies and/or actions. If information about specific topics to be covered at the conference is not available at the time of the application, the application must include the topic(s) of interest for the group (i.e. crime, code enforcement) and its applicability toward achieving a recommended action activity or policy in the neighborhood's neighborhood plan.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO COMPLETE PROJECT: Each applicant must submit a copy of their organizational Bylaws along with copies of their Treasurer's Report and Meeting Minutes from the two (2) most recently held meetings. Organizations without Bylaws are only eligible to apply for a maximum of \$500.00.

Application Review

The written application must stand alone and will serve as the primary vehicle for applicants to provide information on their proposed projects. However, during the review process, applicants may be asked to provide additional information and/or attend an interview with the RNA Grant Review Committee. Inaccurate, incomplete, or unclear applications may be disqualified. **Your application must convince the RNA Grant Review Committee that your project is well planned, will be ready to start when you say it will, and that the results you specify can be achieved by June 30, 2017.**

Applications are first reviewed by the Office of Neighborhood Services to assure the application is complete and activities to be conducted are fundable under program guidelines.

If the proposed project is to take place in a low-to moderate-income neighborhood, it may be eligible for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, whereas applications received from non low-to-moderate income neighborhoods are eligible to receive funding from the City. In instances where CDBG funds are utilized, CDBG-eligible grants may go through an additional review by Neighborhood Services and HUD Community Resources staff. The availability of funding for grants funded by CDBG funds and/or city funds depends upon the amount of funds made available to the city by HUD and approved HUD Community resources and by City Council.

Neighborhood Services staff assembles the Neighborhood Development Grant applications and forwards them to the RNA Grant Review Committee members. The RNA Grant Review Committee meets and makes recommendations on which grants to fund and at what amounts. These recommendations are then forwarded to the full RNA committee for final review and approval. Once approved by the full RNA committee, recommendations are made to the City Manager and City Council for approval.

Grant Obligations

After the Neighborhood Development Grants have been approved by the RNA, Neighborhood Services staff will create the grant contract, referred to as an Agreement. This contract is an agreement between the neighborhood organization and the City of Roanoke. Neighborhoods are acting as a contractor of the City, much like the City would have a contract with, say, a paving company to resurface streets. As such, to be eligible to receive a reimbursement check from the city's Finance Department, your organization will be required to complete a W-9 which will include your organization's Employee Identification Number (EIN) which can be easily obtained from the IRS (www.irs.gov). Your organization's EIN is only used for the purposes of the Finance Department as funds received by the neighborhood group will NOT be reported as earned income to the IRS. CDBG-funded grants may require additional Federal guidelines to be followed for completing the project, including Davis-Bacon Labor laws, Fair Housing, and ADA laws and guidelines.

Project Implementation and Reporting

Once the agreements are signed and executed, neighborhoods can begin their projects as funds become available on or about July 1, 2016.

INTERIM REPORT: If the project is not completed within the first six months, an **Interim Report must be submitted** to Neighborhood Services by January 31, 2017 outlining the progress the organization has made on the project thus far.

PAYMENT REQUEST: In order to receive payment, neighborhood organizations must register as a recognized vendor with the city and submit a Payment Request Form with a Quote Sheet **with** detailed invoice(s) and or receipt(s) backing up the amount of funds being requested. Advance payment requests will not be honored.

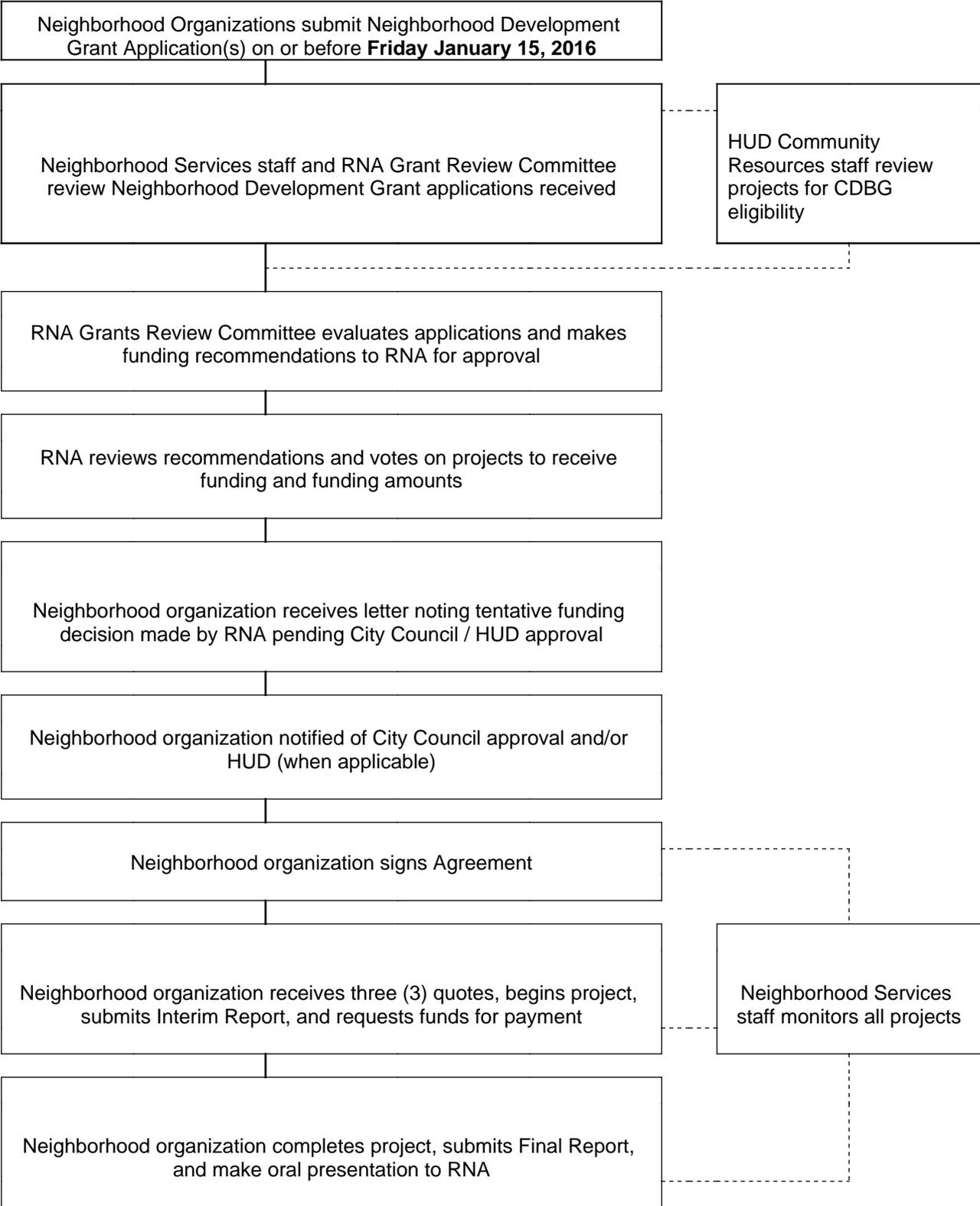
FINAL REPORT: After completing the project, the neighborhood **must submit** a written **Final Report** as well as be prepared to provide an oral presentation of the project at a future RNA meeting and/or other venue as selected by the RNA. The Final Report and RNA presentation should describe the project's implementation, how the **goals** were achieved, how the project benefited the neighborhood and supported the neighborhood's plan. Before and after photos of your project should be taken and submitted with your Final Report. The Final Report should also include copies of receipts and expense reports, and a statement requesting that the grant be closed. If the grant funding was used for training or conference attendance, a separate report must be submitted indicating the project the group plans to undertake to implement one or more recommended action activities and/or policies as noted in the neighborhood's neighborhood plan as a result of information gained at the conference. Implementing this project may require receipt of additional funding the following fiscal year.

Project Completion

After the Final Report has been approved, the neighborhood will be notified that the grant has been

closed and is eligible to apply for another grant in the next year's round of grants. Note that no additional funding will be provided to the organization until all reports have been received and the grant has been closed.

Neighborhood Development Grant (NDG) Process Chart



Neighborhood Development Grant Scoring Criteria

The applications for the Neighborhood Development Grant are reviewed and ranked by the RNA Grant Review Committee made up of Roanoke Neighborhood Advocate members and staffed by representatives from the City of Roanoke's Planning Building and Development Neighborhood Services and HUD Community Resources staff. To make the process of awarding grants easier, a criteria form is used to score applications and rank them for funding. Competition for limited funds is high. Thus, it is in the organization's best interest to complete the application while addressing the grant award criteria listed below. The Evaluation Criteria, a maximum of 100 points, is as follows:

Goals (Maximum Points 25)

It is important that your project clearly link to one or more of the action activities and/or policies as noted in your neighborhood's Neighborhood Plan, the city's *Vision 2001-2020* Comprehensive Plan, Arts & Culture Plan or other component plans of *Vision 2001-2020*.

Need (Maximum Points 5)

The application addresses an important neighborhood need and is convincing about the need for this project and the City's financial assistance.

Experience (Maximum Points 5)

Points will be given for the organization's prior experience and demonstrated ability to complete the project in a timely manner.

Planning (Maximum Points 10)

The project is well planned to insure completion within time guidelines. The project's activities are clear and well-developed to address the problem and achieve the goals. Required collaborations have been performed and neighborhood support for the project defined.

Impact (Maximum Points 5)

The project should make a visible/measurable improvement to the quality of life in the neighborhood.

Sustainability (Maximum Points 5)

The project should contribute to the self-sufficiency of the organization, and assist the organization with the completion of future projects.

Innovation (Maximum Points 5)

Points will be given for projects that provide new models for other neighborhoods.

Leveraging (Maximum Points 15)

Points will be given for a project that leverages or combines funding from sources that contribute to the project and thus does not rely solely on financial assistance from the City.

Environment and/or Arts/Cultural Impact (Maximum Points 15)

The project promotes/enhances the city's Clean and Green campaign and/or Arts and Cultural Plan initiatives and encourages projects that further this commitment. In addition, through its Arts and Cultural Plan, the City encourages the inclusion of diverse art forms in neighborhoods, parks, public schools, etc. Examples include public art projects, art festivals, showcasing of local art works and talent and/or bringing in programs from Roanoke's arts and cultural organizations.

Organizational Involvement (Maximum Points 10)

The organization's documented contribution to the project, financial and/or volunteer, is viable and has the support of its membership to carry out the project within the time guidelines.

City Policies/Federal Regulations

- **Eligible groups:** Neighborhood / community groups, neighborhood crime watch groups.
- **Ineligible groups:** Educational institutions, religious institutions, private and for-profit businesses and corporations, individuals.
- **Eligible projects:** Projects that implement your neighborhood plan's recommended action activities and /or projects such as streetscape improvement projects, crime prevention, neighborhood physical improvements / beautification / enhancement projects such as trees, community gardens, gateway signs, art/cultural activities, and projects that address neighborhood preservation, blight, safety, and/or security.
- **Non-allowable costs:**
 - Contributions and donations
 - Entertainment (including meals and alcohol)
 - Fees, fines and penalties
 - Political activities
 - Staff costs

NOTE: Dinners, parties, refreshments, political forums and other non-allowable costs included in your budget must be paid for with neighborhood funds and should not be included as part of your grant project.

- **Procurement** (buying goods and services) guidelines require that you use quote sheets for anything purchased over \$100. You should obtain at least three (3) quotes for the project noting the vendors and associated cost estimates on the quote sheet. If there are not three vendors who can provide the goods / services your are seeking, or if you only receive one or two of the total quotes requested, note this with an explanation on your application. If you select a vendor other than the lowest priced one, you are required to provide a justification for doing so. Often, a neighborhood will prefer to support a business in the neighborhood if the price isn't too much higher or will select a vendor with more experience rather than one based solely on price.

A vendor who has been debarred, suspended or ineligible to conduct business **using federal funds** can not be used by the organization to complete their project. As such, the organization should verify the vendor's status against the www.sam.gov Excluded Parties List System.

The name of the vendor to be used in addition to documentation showing the vendor awarded the project is eligible to receive federal funds must be provided **prior to execution of the project and receipt of funds.**

- **Time frame for expending money:** The project must be completed by June 30, 2017.
- **Sign-off by involved city departments:** Any city department involved in the project (i.e., Parks & Recreation, Public Works, etc.) must provide written documentation as such as an attachment to the application.
- **Amendments to include extensions or changes** to the signed Agreement are discouraged. Change requests must be submitted in writing, and are subject to approval of the RNA Grant Review Committee. If approved, an amended Agreement will be created and approved by all parties signing the original Agreement before being executed.

□ **Grant Reporting:**

INTERIM REPORT: If the project is not completed within the first six months, an **Interim Report** must be submitted to Neighborhood Services by **January 31, 201** outlining the progress the organization has made on the project thus far.

FINAL REPORT: After completing the project, the neighborhood **must submit** a written **Final Report** as well as be prepared to provide an oral presentation of the project at a future RNA meeting and/or other venue as selected by the RNA. The Final Report and RNA presentation should describe the project's implementation, how the **goals** were achieved, how the project benefited the neighborhood and supported the neighborhood's plan. Before and after photos of your project should be taken and submitted with your Final Report. The Final Report should also include copies of receipts and expense reports, and a statement requesting that the grant be closed. If the CDBG funding was used for training or conference attendance, a separate report must be submitted indicating the project the group plans to undertake to implement one or more recommended action activities and/or policies as noted in the neighborhood's neighborhood plan as a result of information gained at the conference. Implementing this project may require receipt of additional funding the following fiscal year.

Note that no additional funding will be provided to an organization until ALL reports have been received and the grant has been closed.

Tips for Success

- Involve your members. Don't try to do it all yourself!
- Stay in contact with the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates and/or call the Office of Neighborhood Services if you need help.
- Turn in your Interim and Final reports on time. Plan ahead to meet your deadline.
- Keep a file on your project for at least five (5) years. Your file **MUST** contain copies of all documentation associated with the project, such as:
 - Grant Application
 - Signed Agreement
 - Quotes
 - Interim and Final Reports
 - Cancelled checks
 - Payment Request with invoices and receipts attached
 - If using contractors to perform work using CDBG funds, the www.sam.gov printout.
 - All letters / emails associated with the project
 - If using CDBG funds for infrastructure/construction/rehabilitation projects in excess of over \$2000 and involving contractor services by others than city staff will require copies of all Davis-Bacon related paperwork. (The Davis–Bacon Act of 1931 is a United States federal law that establishes the requirement for paying the local prevailing wages on public works projects for laborers and mechanics. It applies to “contractors and subcontractors performing on federally funded or assisted contracts in excess of \$2,000 for the construction, alteration, or repair (including painting and decorating) of public buildings or public works.)

- Do not write checks to individuals. CDBG funds **MUST** be paid to a business (and not an individual or organization) unless attending a conference or training is involved.
- Attach the needed support documentation to your Payment Request. Not submitting invoices and/or receipts with your Payment Request **will delay** the processing of your reimbursement payment.
- If your organization is a 501c3 or 501c4, please make certain your officer information is current with the Virginia’s State Corporation Commission by visiting their website at (<https://www.scc.virginia.gov/clk/bussrch.aspx>) and clicking on the ‘Clerks Information System (CIS)’ link.

Glossary of Terms

- CDBG:** Community Development Block Grant. The City of Roanoke receives money through this Federal program each year. Some but not all Neighborhood Development grants are funded with CDBG funds.
- Agreement:** A written and signed contract between your organization and the City of Roanoke to perform what you proposed, for an agreed amount of funding within a certain amount of time.
- Davis-Bacon:** The Davis–Bacon Act of 1931 is a United States federal law that establishes the requirement for paying the local prevailing wages on public works projects for laborers and mechanics. It applies to “contractors and subcontractors performing on federally funded or assisted contracts in excess of \$2,000 for the construction, alteration, or repair (including painting and decorating) of public buildings or public works.
- Final Report:** A form to report your assets, expenditures, and accomplishments which is submitted to close out your grant.
- Interim Report:** A form to report your progress on the project, and to assist the organization with keeping on track to complete the project on time and within budget.
- Invoice:** A bill for goods or services which has not been paid.
- Payment Request:** Form submitted with documents to receive payment.
- Quote Sheet:** Form documenting you obtained three (3) quotes for any item over \$100.
- Receipt:** Shows the amount you have paid for goods and services.

DO:

- √ **Complete the work plan.** It will help you complete the project.
- √ **Brainstorm project with your members.** They have good ideas and may volunteer to coordinate the project. **Recruit volunteers** as you are developing the grant application. Neighborhood Development Grant projects should be approved by the membership so they know the good work your organization is doing. Projects give members a chance to work as a team.
- √ **Get help** from the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates and/or Office of Neighborhood Services if you need assistance with your application.
- √ **Identify new projects.** Ask yourselves, “What needs does our neighborhood have?” Remember, grants are seed money to help you start and complete a project as they are not intended to fund an ongoing project over and over again.
- √ **Tie your project to your neighborhood goals and organization’s business plan, the city’s Clean & Green Initiative and/or Arts & Cultural Plan!!!** Your project should enhance your neighborhood’s participation and commitment toward the City of Roanoke’s goal of being a vibrant, sustainable, healthy, environmentally ‘clean and green’ city. Consider the inclusion of Public Art in your neighborhood, park, and public school and/or at your neighborhood gateways.
- √ **Get estimates** when developing your budget. Remember, if your project runs over budget, YOU pay for overruns.
- √ **Get approval from city departments** that you expect to help you with this project. Departments have to schedule their assistance into their work day. There may be a charge for some services and if so, you should plan for this.
- √ **Start working on the project** as soon as you can and pace yourself. Too often, neighborhood organizations wait until the last couple of months to complete their projects.

Don’t:

- × **Develop a project and THEN share it with your group’s members.**
- × **Assume city departments will provide service** or assistance unless you have spoken with them.
- × **Fund ongoing programs or expenses** such as office staff, newsletters, liability insurance or bills.
- × **Use funds** for alcoholic beverages, food, or social events.
- × **Fund a program that provides money** to an individual or to purchase equipment.

- × **Use funds to hire people** to do work which could be done by volunteers.