

Workshop title:
**The Block Grant Process and How to Increase
Involvement: Approaches & Paradigms**
An organizational outline and outcomes
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INTRODUCTION

Many cities are recipients of Community Development Block Grants but do not have the necessary citizen information and procedural knowledge that would empower neighborhood organizations to address issues of unemployment, housing renovation and neighborhood cleanup and crime. Our presentation will offer more than ten different proposals that can be used to put CDBG funds to more productive and neighborhood-oriented use.

A STRATEGY FOR NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTH

What follows is a viable and valuable contribution to each neighborhood association's own understanding of itself. Attorney would charge you hundreds and others would take time "helping" you so that later on they could help themselves. Just remember my name and contact information; and as I share each approach and paradigm with you, you will be able to one day tell others that there was one guy, one neighborhood expert, who helped you solely for the reason that he understood that in numbers there is strength.

Neighborhood Association Formation: Embryonic Beginnings

1. Learn about and study the "poverty zip codes" in your city. Select those that need the most help and define your boundaries in that area.
2. Form contacts with the media who address "community news." Keep these names on speed dial and/or in your Rolodex

3. Choose a name that is also a descriptor of your boundaries, mission and/or vision.
4. The formation of some type of “advisory committee, a group separate from your group, is important in relation to CSDBG funding
5. Develop a mission statement and vision statement.
6. Select key people who want to work and share your vision for your Board of Directors. PhDs are fine, but community activists and civic and religious leaders are better.
7. Document our first “meeting” keep minutes and distribute them to all core members and Board members.
8. Write articles of incorporation for submittal to your state’s Secretary of State office (nonprofit division). Fees will vary.
9. Once you receive this document, contact the local newspaper and community media via a press conference. Save all clippings and document the meeting.
10. Download your Form IRS 1023 and begin working on it. Most people hire attorneys but they will over charge you. Take your time and you can do it yourself. Once completed, the cost is \$850 along with the app. Mail it to Covington, Kentucky. It will take from 5 to 8 months.
11. With nonprofit status, you qualify for all types of grants, including CDBG grants.
12. Set up a meeting with your city’s City Planning director. Maintain regular (every 2 weeks) contact. Introduce this person to our neighborhood group and the advisory group you’ve formed

Neighborhood Association Formation: The Nuts and Bolts Work

1. Begin to compile a file system on major demographic areas impacting on the poverty neighborhoods with emphasis on your own.
2. Get a list of local grants allocated that you might not know about
3. Secure a post office box, letterhead and business cards and begin mailing letters to key contacts all around the city. Don’t forget the State Capitol.
4. Document all meetings events (forums, seminars, symposia, etc.) that you sponsor or lend your organization’s name to.
5. Begin conducting grant research and chart out deadlines, specific funding areas, award announcement dates, etc.
6. Begin studying the history of CBG in your city. When was the first grant? What are the funding amounts to the city, per year, since the inception of the program? What priorities are recognized by the city? Was there ample “community participation”? Does the city recognize

“community development day”?

7. Create a “neighborhood center” in your community. Here’s how to do it.

CONCLUSION

1. Partnering and collaborative efforts (take care!)
2. Locate local construction companies and developers to meet with them for future funding
3. Appoint someone to sit in on city council meetings when grant awards are announced.
4. After a year place the Minutes in a binder to serve as “organization history.” Repeat on an annual basis.
5. When and where possible, make a tour videotape of the highlights (and low points) of your community, within the boundaries you have defined.
6. Create a photo album of key points in your community, the events that your group sponsors, etc.
7. Open up an account in the organization’s name that requires at least two (2) signatures.

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Table 1: Neighborhood Characteristics and Investment Strategies

<i>Housing market Area</i>	<i>Racial Characteristics</i>	<i>Investor Strategies</i>	<i>Equal Opportunity Strategies</i>
Full Investment Area	Predominantly White	Exclusion of Minorities	Open access, economic and racial integration
Disinvestment area	Transition or projected transition white to minority	Rapid transition	Package services mutually beneficial to residents and investors
Uninvestment area	Predominantly minority	Exploitation of tenants and abandonment	Maintain social services and plan for development
Reinvestment area	Re-establishment of Whites	Relocation of minorities	Obtain participation for residents in redevelopment

SOURCE: National Urban League: "Issues in Equal Access to Housing." Washington, DC. August, 1973.

