



VERNON COMMUNITY FUND  
NOTICE OF FUND AVAILABILITY (NOFA)  
CAPITAL GRANTS

The Vernon CommUNITY Fund is pleased to announce the availability of funds for capital expenditures. Potential applicants are encouraged to review the City of Vernon web site ([www.cityofvernon.org](http://www.cityofvernon.org)) and click on the Vernon CommUNITY Fund button. The following general information appears on the web site as well as more details about the history of grants awarded

**Background:**

Founded in 1905 as the first exclusively industrial city in the Southwestern United States the City of Vernon is an industrial city of 5.2 square miles located several miles to the southeast of Downtown Los Angeles in Southern California. Vernon currently houses more than 1,800 businesses that employ approximately 50,000 people, serving as a vital economic engine in the region. Vernon maintains strong philanthropic ties with the neighboring communities where much of its workforce lives, providing significant financial support for public services including health care and education.

The Vernon CommUNITY Fund (VCF) contributes to the health, well-being and quality of life in surrounding communities. The Fund is administered by a diverse group of appointed volunteers serving as the Grant Committee which reviews and approves applications from community and faith-based organizations as well as local governments.

**VCF Mission:**

The Vernon CommUNITY Fund provides charitable contributions to community-based organizations and governmental agencies in support of efforts to improve the quality of life, strengthen families and affirm Vernon's ties with neighboring communities in pursuit of bright futures.

**Goals:**

- To strengthen and support non-profit organizations that benefit residents and neighborhoods;
- To improve the built environment of Vernon and nearby communities;
- To encourage and inspire positive social development in Vernon and neighboring communities;
- To support and assist organizations that expand opportunities for training and development of residents for potential employment in businesses located in Vernon and surrounding communities;
- To promote positive social development of children, youth, families and senior residents in Vernon and surrounding areas;
- To promote effective and responsible leadership at every level of society

**Values:**

- Shared responsibility for the well-being of our neighbors now and into the future;
- Integrity and accountability for fair decisions using high ethical standards;
- Unity of purpose and commitment to succeed at fulfilling our mission

**Definition and Funds Available:**

Capital Grants are specific one-time funding awards that are most often time limited and related to physical acquisition, repurposing and improvement of property that supports an organization's charitable involvement in the community. Capital grants typically do not support personnel, general operating costs or programs. The Vernon CommUNITY fund will award up to \$206,375 for one or more capital grant(s) in 2018/2019 and no less than 25% of the total CommUNITY fund annual budget after administrative costs in subsequent fiscal years.

Consideration will be given for the following purposes with useful life of 10 years or more:

- Equipment, furnishing, and other major material purchases
- Renovations, refurbishment, remodeling, rehabilitation, etc. for outdated facilities
- Construction or purchase of new facilities
- Land purchases
- Capital campaigns (formal approaches to major construction projects)
- Matching/challenge grants for capital campaigns

**Eligibility and application process:**

Capital Grants are for projects located in the area served by the Vernon CommUNITY Fund. All eligibility criteria for the general fund will apply for consideration of a Capital Grant, as well as additional criteria outlined here.

The application for a capital grant is different than the typical operating or project support grant.

The application process is initiated with a formal letter of interest (LOI) signed by the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board of Directors. This is not the formal proposal. Rather this letter requests the VCF to consider capital grants funding for a specific purpose that is outlined in the letter.

Required Information for the LOI (2 pages maximum):

- Description of the purpose for which an award would be used;
- Estimated cost of the total project;
- Time period in which funds will be spent;
- Site Readiness Information (Please see explanation below for more detail.)
- Description of final product and value added to Vernon and the surrounding community.

Additional requirements:

- A copy of the organization's IRS determination letter;
- Most recent Form 990
- Most recent financial audit
- List of the board of directors
- List of other funding partners

**Site Readiness:**

The letter of intent for a capital project must contain an accurate physical description of the location for which funds will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant.

The VCF grant review will include a full review of the following:

**Site control:** Who owns and has title to the property? If not the applicant, what is the relationship between the property owner and applicant? If the applicant non-profit is a tenant of the property, what are the length and terms of the lease? Is the applicant able to assure ten or more years of continuous tenancy? Why is the tenant and not the owner applying for funds?

**Proposed use of funds:** The letter of interest must demonstrate intent well beyond the idea stage of development. Is transparency and approval evident in records of the Board of Directors, its committees and planning meetings? Are other funders of the organization supportive of the capital project, even if they will not be direct contributors? Why does the applicant believe the use of capital grants is feasible to achieve its goals? What is the proposed total estimate of costs and how was it derived?

**Project Management:** What is the proposed plan for managing capital expenditures? What key staff/personnel will be involved? What is their experience with capital grants? What consultant expertise will be used? How will consultants be chosen?

**Ongoing Maintenance:** Is there a plan and budget developed for ongoing maintenance of the capital project? Who will maintain the capital project after completion?

**Request for Proposal (RFP):**

The VCF Grant Committee will select the most promising applications to advance to the RFP stage. Applicants may expect site visits, meetings with City of Vernon consultants and Administrative Staff of the City.

**Timeline:**

2018

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Monday, July 30    | Release of Notice of Fund Availability                          |
| Wednesday, Sept 12 | Bidders conference (time and place to be determined by 8/22/18) |
| Monday, Oct 22     | Deadline to submit LOI  |

2019

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Friday, Jan 4 | Notification of successful bid & Request for Proposal issued                       |
| Friday, Mar 1 | Deadline for submission of proposal  |
| May 2019      | Presentation for approval by VCF Grants Committee<br>Grant Agreement Letter issued |
| June 2019     | Grant funded   |

For additional information, please contact [vernoncommunityfund@ci.vernon.ca.us](mailto:vernoncommunityfund@ci.vernon.ca.us) or call (323) 351-1198.