



December, 2018

## Useful Community Development... quick notes

**Inside: 2018 reader favorites, discussing racism, organizational capacity for advocacy, environmental grants (including one for non-profits!), technology and cities**

**Visit us and explore at <https://www.useful-community-development.org>.**



### **Starting the New Year Off Right**

**As the glitz and glimmer fades in the new year, we wish you, your families, and your organizations a great 2019. Tips and tools are featured below, just like every month.**

**As a bonus, you might want to review some of our "greatest hits" from this past**

year for inspiration. We've received especially strong positive responses in 2018 from our pages on [cleaning up your neighborhood park](#), [rezoning opposition](#), [starting a community development corporation](#), [urban design principles](#), and [community planning process](#).

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## Discussion Starters on Addressing Racism

Our friends at Everyday Democracy published a graphic on [7 key lessons for addressing racism](#) in community programs. You can download this visual and use it to stimulate conversation in your community meetings or in your new year's retreats.

Also of use especially to predominantly white organizations will be an article on [why my "good intentions" aren't enough to dismantle white superiority](#).

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## Community Organizations, How's Your Advocacy?

Community organizations often want to undertake some advocacy work, even while keeping themselves under the legal limit required to preserve their non-profit status. So when you want to do a lot of advocacy, but need to do it really efficiently in terms of your time and money, you need to evaluate your advocacy projects carefully.

The Bolder Advocacy initiative has developed some free tools to let you do just that. Click on the advocacy capacity tool blue title on [this page](#) to download their regular tool, which will require a fair amount of discussion. They also developed ACT! Quick, a shorter version that they say will require less than 15 minutes at a meeting. Lastly, they have deployed an international capacity tool reached from the same page.

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## Future of Cities

If you're an elected or informal city leader, you may be interested in a 75-minute video on the future of cities, featuring two visionaries who offer outstanding qualifications to speak to how technology can help create innovative solutions for community-defined city issues. Nicholas NegroPonte is a technology and start-up

expert, while Carol Coletta currently is a Senior Fellow at the Kresge Foundation, after serving in several prominent leadership roles concerning civic endeavors and city revitalization.

Access the [video on youtube here](#).

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## Environmental Grant Applications Due in January

Your city or other local government in the U.S. may want to pursue grant funding from EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency. Two grant applications of special interest are due January 31. One covers brownfields; read [our page](#) first if you don't understand what this is. The second opportunity revolves around community education and engagement on environmental justice. (Again, read [our page](#) first if you don't understand this idea, which typically centers on disadvantaged communities bearing a disproportionate share of environmental problems.)

The brownfields grant cycle, if we could call it that, begins with an assessment grant that would help you identify your exact issue and what will be necessary to clean it up. More than 100 of these are expected to be awarded nationwide. In addition to cities and towns, other groups eligible to apply include school districts, councils of governments, townships, public housing agencies, 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, and more.

Then after assessment grants are completed, a typical step might be applying for a cleanup grant, which is more competitive to obtain. Also a few multipurpose brownfields grants are awarded every funding cycle to allow a community to develop a more comprehensive approach to multiple sites.

Reach the resources pages about all of these brownfield grants [here](#).

For the environmental justice small grants program, which carries a maximum award of \$30,000, read the [request for applications](#) here. Non-profits (not local governments) and Indian tribes are the eligible applicants for this program.

**New on Our Website** We answered these questions about [down zoning of property without notice](#), ["sail signs" for a home church](#), [grandfathered deed restrictions](#), [for sale sign in motor coach](#), [percentage required to extend or renew deed restrictions](#).

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