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A Study Of The Grant Writing Policies And Practices Of Municipalities In Polk County Florida Having A Population Less Than 25,000

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A STUDY OF THE GRANT WRITING POLICIES AND PRACTICES
OF MUNICIPALITIES IN POLK COUNTY FLORIDA
HAVING A POPULATION LESS THAN 25,000

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of English
in the College of Arts and Humanities
at the University of Central Florida
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the grant writing policies and practices of the fifteen municipalities in Polk County, Florida having a population less than 25,000, compare these findings qualitatively, and to present the data in a form usable by any city in Polk County so each city can make any needed adjustments to their grant writing strategy that will increase their success of grant funding.

This study is needed now because smaller cities are continuing to feel the effects of the recession, a slumping housing market, and a reduction of real estate property values which means lower tax revenue. City managers and staff need to sharpen their grant writing skills to maximize the success of their grant applications.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methodology were used in this study. The quantitative research data was gathered with the aid of a survey sent to each city manager of the selected cities. The qualitative research data consists of follow-up interviews with the fifteen city managers. Fourteen of the fifteen cities responded and all returned surveys were 100% complete.

The results of the survey include respondent demographics, a lengthy discussion of each city's attitudes and history with grant application and administration, and the training level of staff involved in grant writing. The chapter goes on to analyze and discuss the policy of local elected officials regarding grants and concludes on the topic of challenges facing Polk County municipalities and possible solutions that may increase their grant writing success.

The final chapter brings the study to a conclusion with a summary and a review of the findings from the survey. Several recommendations are offered that, if implemented, could increase the success rate cities are currently achieving with grant applications. Several

implications are offered of possible outcomes if no changes are made, and finally, specific areas

of future research and study are discussed.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

AGWA   American Grant Writers' Association

ARRA   American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

CDBG   Community Block Development Grant

FERA   Federal Emergency Relief Act

IDEA   Individual with Disabilities Education Act

NPR   National Performance Review

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The scope of the study concerns only the cities in Polk County, Florida, both incorporated and unincorporated, that have a population of less than 25,000 citizens. The focus of the study is smaller municipalities. Larger cities in Polk County, and Florida, typically have a dedicated grant writing staff that continuously monitors their policies and practices for maximum results. Small cities usually do not have a dedicated grant writing staff. There are seventeen incorporated cities in Polk County. Two have populations of 25,000 or greater: Lakeland and Winter Haven. The remaining fifteen, ranging in population from 252 to 18,753, are part of this study.

In the initial research for this thesis, I determined that city polices on grants varies widely. Policy is generally established by city council or city commission, not city staff. It appears not all city commissions are enthused about applying for grants. This is well documented and discussed in one or more of the survey questions. Without the support of a city's city council or commission, grant opportunities regardless of how beneficial they may be to the city, will not be pursued. In Lake Wales, for example, at least one current commissioner believes not all grants should be considered because of the perceived restrictive reporting requirements. Another example of a policy decision would be for a municipality to not accept grant monies from a foundation that is tied to the tobacco industry.

This study is needed now because cities of all sizes are continuing to feel the effects of the recession, a slumping housing market, and a reduction of real estate property values which means lower tax revenue to the cities. Even with the anticipation of significantly lower tax revenue, most cities decided to not raise property taxes because it would aggravate the already existing problems of the relatively high unemployment rate and the record number of residential foreclosures. The City of Lake Wales, for example, chose to effectively reduce the property tax rate by 12.2 percent (City of Lake Wales, 1) in an attempt to mitigate the city's 14.1 percent unemployment rate and 41 percent poverty rate in some sections of town. The taxable value of real estate in Lake Wales has been reduced in 2010 by 15.5 percent from 2009 and by a total reduction of 24.2 percent since 2007(City of Lake Wales, C4). This has led to a corresponding reduction in revenue to the city. Other cities in Polk County are in a similar situation.

This thesis will study the grant writing policies and practices of the fifteen municipalities in Polk County Florida having a population less than 25,000 citizens, as shown in Table 1, Municipalities in Polk County Florida Having a Population Less Than 25,000.

A History of Grants

The history of grants in the United States predates the Constitution. The Land Ordinance of 1785, enacted by Congress under the Articles of Confederation, required every new township incorporated from federal lands to reserve one lot for public schools (Ford, 378). Early grants also came in the form of money, as well as land. The need to help victims of civil disturbance and disasters prompted the federal government to provide grant assistance to communities. For example, at the February 8, 1870 meeting of the Continental Congress a motion was passed to

compensate for damages to the public school in Wilmington, Delaware (Ford, 141). Following the Whiskey Rebellion in late 1794, the federal government compensated individuals who could prove they suffered losses (Ford, 1000). When the town of Alexandria, Virginia burned in 1827, Congress appropriated $20,000 in assistance (Gales, 752). In 1817, Congress awarded a grant to the Hartford Deaf and Dumb Asylum in Connecticut which was intended to educate deaf persons. The asylum was later renamed the American School for the Deaf and remains the nation's oldest school for the hearing impaired.

The migration to the American West during the 19th century depended greatly on federal aid from federal troops who provided law enforcement protection and constructed a network of over 70 wilderness forts. The forts provided medical services, blacksmith shops, and even created local economies through supply purchases.

During this period, the federal government played a restricted role in the area of social services. This was largely due to the dominant strict constructionist views of most national politicians and their support for state's rights. For example, President Franklin Pierce (1853-1857) vetoed an 1854 act to allocate funds to states to help the indigent insane saying "if Congress is to make provisions for paupers, the fountains of charity will be dried up at home, and the several States, instead of bestowing their own means on the social wants of their people will become humble suppliants for the bounty of the Federal Government, reversing their true relation to this Union" (Canada, 6).

The outcome of the Civil War had a significant impact on the future of the grants-in-aid system. The prevailing view was that the Constitution and federal law empowered the government to take a wide range of measures to attain the goals of the Constitution's preamble

and this would set the stage of the grants-in-aid for the years ahead. For example, the Morrill Act of 1862 provided land grants for the establishment of universities focusing on agriculture, mechanics, and military science.

But it was not until the latter half of the 19th century that Congress authorized the first financial grant that targeted a specific segment of the population based on need. In 1879, Congress authorized the purchase and distribution of reading materials to public institutions for the education of the blind (Canada, 7).

The Weeks Act of 1911 is generally considered the first example of the modern grant-in-aid model (Canada, 8). The act was focused on the protection of forested watershed areas of navigable streams from fire. Although only $200,000 was appropriated, the act contained several provisions that became common in future grants. Most significant were the requirements of the approval of state plans before federal funds were dispersed; matching state funds; and the oversight role of federal officials. These requirements, in modified form, are still in effect today. The Smith- Hughes Act of 1917 was the first grant program for vocational education, including agriculture, industrial skills, and home economics. It was also the first grant program to distribute funds based on selected variables. Grants for agricultural skills were distributed based on a state's rural population; grants for industrial skills and home economics were distributed based on a state's urban population, and a grant with several eligible criteria was distributed based on a state's population.

Following the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt's Administration increased development of the grants-in-aid system as part of his New Deal program of social relief, financial reform, and economic recovery. Roosevelt, with the support of Congress, used a broad

constructionist interpretation of the Constitution to expand federal involvement in areas where little action had previously been taken, such as public housing and employment security. The Tennessee Valley Authority and Social Security are both New Deal programs.

The first federal grant program to the states for the express purpose of providing public relief was the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933 (FERA). States could distribute the grant money in the form of direct relief or "work relief" which was President Roosevelt's preference. States were required to match half of the FERA funds and could distribute the rest on a discretionary basis where it felt it was most needed. This was the first use of federal employment for work relief purposes. The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935 authorized the Works Project Administration, which employed over 3 million citizens at its peak in 1936 (Canada, 10).

The two decades following the Roosevelt Administration saw the federal grants-in-aid programs gradually expand. During President Harry Truman's administration (1945-1953) the federal government added grant programs in agricultural research, health initiatives, and housing. President Dwight Eisenhower (1953-1961) further expanded the number of grant programs and by the time President Eisenhower left office, the total amount of federal grant funding had grown from $2.4 billion to $6.8 billion.

President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" initiative greatly expanded the grants-in-aid system. Relying implicitly on the Citizenship and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment, the President and Congress enacted legislation that greatly expanded the federal government's role in state and local affairs. More grant programs were enacted during the Johnson Administration (1963-1969) than in all preceding years in U.S. history combined. The list of new grant programs was exhaustive and the funding grew to $18.6 billion by 1968. All of

the new programs were categorical grants, with the exception of two block grants in health and law enforcement. New categorical grants addressed environmental concerns, such as water and air pollution.

The expansion of the grants-in-aid under President Johnson led his successor, President Richard Nixon (1969-1974), to characterize the system as a "terrible tangle" of categorical grants plagued by overlapping programs, inefficiency, excessive administrative requirements, and imposition of federal priorities on state and local governments (Lilley, 76). President Nixon advocated a "New Federalism" which he implemented through general revenue sharing which sent funds to state and local government with virtually no accountability requirements. The goal was to combine the advantages of national revenue collection with the advantages of local discretion over spending. Nixon also proposed special revenue sharing which was similar to block grants but required fewer application controls. The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) was a Nixon proposal and still remains one of the primary and significant funding sources for local governments.

The administration of President Ronald Regan (1981-1989) sought to decentralize grant administration to state and local governments and also reduce grant funding. President Reagan supported block grants as a means of disengaging the federal government from policy areas he viewed as state and local concerns (Canada, 13).

The grants-in-aid system experienced little change under the administrations of President George H.W. Bush (1989-1993) and President Bill Clinton (1993-2001). President Clinton focused on improving management of grant funding and administrative of performance with the

National Performance Review (NPR) which gave greater state and local flexibility over grant programs while requiring the federal government closely monitor the performance of programs.

After the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, the administration of President George W. Bush (2001-2009) proposed a number of changes in grant programs for state and local emergency preparedness. These new programs provided significant funding increases for existing emergency preparedness programs.

There are currently 1420 federal grant and assistance programs administered by 57 different agencies. In fiscal year 2009, federal grants totaled $744.1 billion and represented nearly one-quarter (23.0 percent) of all federal spending (U.S. Census Bureau). There are 20-25 federal grants released every day (Grants.gov).

Types of Federal Grants

The New Deal greatly expanded the use of categorical grants, which are the most common type of grant used today. Categorical grants represent about 90% of all federal grant dollars and can only be spent on very specific and narrowly defined purposes as defined by Congress who also oversees the program's implementation. Examples of categorical grants include Medicare, Food Stamp Program, health and human services, transportation projects, housing and urban development, Medicaid, and Head Start Programs. Eligibility for categorical grants is limited to states, counties, city governments, townships, and federally recognized Native American Tribal Governments. Categorical grants are distributed either on a formula basis or project basis. States compete for project grants. The federal government selects specific projects based on merit, and the selection process is very competitive among states. Formula

grants are noncompetitive and are based on a predetermined formula set by Congress. An example of a formula grant is the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which covers individuals and their families from birth to age 21. The demographics of population, taxable income, unemployment, and poverty level, density of housing and rate of infant mortality are all quantifiable elements used to calculate the amount of aid to be given.

A third type of federal grant is called a block grant. Block grants are issued to local governments in support of municipal services such as public safety and education. Block grants are typically less restrictive than categorical grants allowing local governments to experiment with ways of spending the money to achieve a predetermined goal. Block grants replaced revenue sharing which was the federal policy from 1972 to 1987.

<u>The Grant Situation Today</u>

Cities across the country are experiencing reductions in ad valoreum tax revenues because of the economic downturn. Ad valoreum (Latin for "according to value") is a tax based on the assessed value of real estate and is a significant source of revenue for state and municipal governments. Other revenue sources, such as development impact fees (a one time charge), are also reduced during difficult economic times, but those fees are specifically used to pay for new growth which is not occurring. When the assessed value of real estate declines, as it has in the last several years, tax revenue to cities has declined which reduces the money available to fund routine infrastructure maintenance and even general fund expense items like police, fire, and recreation.

This reduction in ad valoreum tax revenue to municipalities is unprecedented. Between 1985 and 2011, in every year except one, real estate taxable value in Lake Wales, Florida has

increased. The lone exception was in 1993 when there was a reduction of 0.23 percent. In all other years, there was an increase, in some cases as much as 29.0 percent (1997) and 31.3 percent (2006) (City of Lake Wales, C4). This steady increase over the years came to be expected by cities and little attention was given to grants as a funding source. Now that the tax revenue is significantly reduced, possible grant funding for projects needs to be considered and reconsidered.

Because of the tax payment revenue distribution cycle, cities are at least one year behind the collection of any ad valoreum tax increase. With the current economic downturn forecasted to be in a recovery mode for several years, cities must sharpen their grant writing skills going forward to maximize their grant application success.

With falling tax revenue and rising costs, grant funding is an ever increasingly important source of funds for small municipalities in Polk County, Florida, and is needed now more than ever. Grants are typically used for developing park and recreation facilities, infrastructure development and repair, and economic development. Haines City recently received a $750,000 federal grant to refurbish a section of Martin Luther King Jr. Way (Bouffard) and the Davenport city commission recently approved a grant application to be submitted for $650,000 to refurbish Wilson Park (Grogan).

Ad-valoreum taxes are typically not the largest source of revenue for cities, but are the revenue most affected by an economic downturn because they are tied directly to property values. Other revenue sources include charges for services such as water and sewer, intergovernmental revenue (revenue received from other government agencies, such as grants), sales and use taxes, licenses and permits, and fines and forfeitures. Charges for services are the

largest source of revenue for most small cities. In Lake Wales, this category accounts for 31.7% of revenue (City of Lake Wales, C6). In an economic downturn, all categories of revenue sources are affected. The least affected is intergovernmental revenue because grant availability increases when the federal government attempts to stimulate the economy and pull it out of a recession with more grant money being made available.

The problem facing grant writers for small municipalities is that there is not a definitive strategy or methodology that focuses on their specific grant writing needs. There are many books and articles on grant writing, but none that address the unique requirements of small cities. Jody Cameron, Senior Consultant with JCL Associates in Tampa, Florida, offered several suggestions of what municipal grant writers need to do to be more successful. First is networking. Cameron believes that as much as 90% of the success of a grant application comes from connecting and staying connected to the grant funders. This builds relationships and maintains continuity between the municipality and the funding agency. Second is the amount of work that can be done before the work on the grant application is even started. Cameron believes as much as 80% of the grant application process can, and should, be done before the grant application starts. Included in this preparatory work are tasks such as knowing how to research federal grants, how to find potential funders, and knowing what grant reviewers are looking for. She further stated a lack of overall skill sets in grant writing in the Polk County cities that, in her experience, were not pursuing grants as aggressively as they should. Cities lagging behind in grant funding, such as Auburndale and Lake Wales, were not proactive, with staff waiting to be told about grant opportunities instead of taking the initiative to seek out the opportunities that fit their

circumstances. Cameron stated that Lakeland, Haines City, and Winter Haven were much more aggressive in researching grants and finding potential funders.

Federal and state government agencies are not the only source of grant funding. Some federal grant funding agencies are looking more favorably on partnerships between municipalities and non-profits because federal agencies prefer to fund projects that involve multiple sources and stakeholders which can lead to more successful completions. Another concern of federal grant agencies is the perception that municipalities tend to be inefficient in grant administration. In Lake Wales recently, the Main Street Organization wanted to begin a project to build a pavilion in the downtown market square district and ran into negative feedback from city staff so they opted to work with a grant consultant and deal with the city at an arm's length relationship.

Most economists believe the consumer will ultimately bring the nation out of the recession, but are quick to add this cannot happen with high unemployment. In a recent forecast prepared by HIS Global Insight, it was predicted that over 100 metropolitan areas would end 2011 with an unemployment rate of 10 percent or higher, and these same metropolitan areas would not return to their prerecession peaks for jobs until at least 2015. The unemployment rate for Florida at the end of 2010 was 12.0 percent. For Polk County, the unemployment rate at the end of November, 2010 was 13.3 percent, near the record high of 13.9 percent set in July 1992.

Of the fifteen cities including in this study, four raised their ad valoreum tax in 2010, one lowered the tax, and ten kept the same ad valoreum tax as the previous year, as shown in Table 2, Millage Rates For Polk County Small Municipalities 2010 – 2009. The results of this study will

serve as a knowledge base in understanding how cities are dealing with lower ad valoreum tax revenues relative to their grant writing policies and practices.

The organization of the thesis is the traditional five chapter format. Chapter 1 contains the introduction, subject, purpose, scope, significance, relevance, and organization. The first chapter also provides the importance of why this study is needed now. A history of grants within the U.S. is included to provide the reader a foundation along with a discussion of the types of grant available to municipalities and the grant situation today.

Chapter 2 is a literature review of selected articles on grant writing. The chapter begins with reviews of articles covering the basics of grantsmanship. This section is followed by a list of references about the importance of planning in the grant writing process which is followed by a list of selected articles explaining the role and importance of grant reviewers. The chapter also includes references to several articles discussing the need to focus on the creative aspects of grant writing. Several references are also included of publications that cover the general topics of guidelines and format.

Chapter 3 describes the qualitative and quantitative methodology used which for this thesis is primarily the survey and interview format. The survey is posted on www.surveymonkey.com. In addition to surveying and interviewing the fifteen city managers in the selected cities of Polk County, at least one federal grant reviewer and a grant consultant specializing in municipalities will be interviewed.

Chapter 4 focuses on the findings of the surveys and interviews and report on these findings in a qualitative report. Because each city manager was sent the survey and then interviewed, the survey response should be one hundred percent.

Chapter 5 contains conclusions which will include suggested changes to current strategies and recommendations for future projects. One project anticipated from the results of this thesis will be a tutorial and "How To" manual for the grant writing staff of small cities on how they can be more successful in their grant writing efforts.

Table 1

Municipalities in Polk County Florida Having a Population Less Than 25,000

City	Population	Street Address	ZIP+4	Manager's Name	Phone Number
Auburndale	14033	1 Bobby Green Pl	33823-3467	Robert R. Green	(863) 965-5530
Bartow	17007	450 N. Wilson Ave.	33830-3954	George A. Long	(863) 534-0100
Davenport	2758	1 Allapaha Street	33836	Amy Arrington	(863) 419-3300
Dundee	3299	105 Center St.	33838-4306	Paul A. Stewart	(863) 419-3100
Eagle Lake	2825	75 N. 7th St	33839-3221	Peter Gardner	(863) 293-4141
Fort Meade	5766	8 W. Broadway St.	33841-3304	Fred Hilliard	(863) 285-1100
Frostproof	2839	111 E. 1st St.	33843-2003	Tenny R. Croley	(863) 635-7855
Haines City	18753	502 E. Hinson Ave.	33844-5240	Ann Toney-Deal	(863) 421-3600
Highland Park	250	1351 S. Highland Park Dr. Lake Wales, FL	33898-7471	Brian Updike	(863) 676-2760
Hillcrest Heights	252	151 N. Scenic Hwy Babson Park, FL	33827	Larry Blackwelder, Clerk	(863) 638-2732
Lake Alfred	4627	120 E. Pomelo St.	33850-2136	Kristen Kollagaard	(863) 291-5270
Lake Hamilton	1389	PO Box 126	33851-0126	Kimberly Gay, Clerk	(863) 439-1910
Lake Wales	13067	201 E. Central Ave.	33853-4013	Judith Delmar	(863) 678-4182
Mulberry	3359	104 S. Church Ave.	33860-3002	Frank R. Satchel	(863) 425-1125
Polk City	1685	123 Broadway Blvd SE	33868-9225	Cory Carrier	(863) 984-1375

Florida Leagues of Cities. *2010-2011 Municipal Directory.* Tallahassee: 2010. Print

Table 2
Millage Rates for Polk County Small Municipalities 2010 – 2009

City	2010 Millage Rate	2009 Millage Rate
Auburndale	3.8393	3.8393
Bartow	3.9962	3.9962
Davenport	6.0000	5.9792
Dundee	7.0000	7.0000
Eagle Lake	7.6516	7.6516
Fort Meade	3.3509	3.3509
Frostproof	7.8209	7.8209
Haines City	6.9900	6.9900
Highland Park	9.9759	8.3161
Hillcrest Heights	0.3100	0.3125
Lake Alfred	6.5800	6.5800
Lake Hamilton	7.0000	7.0000
Lake Wales	7.9998	7.3277
Mulberry	8.9000	8.0500
Polk City	8.6547	7.8000

Florida Department of Revenue. Comparison of Taxes Levied County and Municipal
Governments Fiscal Years 2009-10 and 2010-11. Tallahassee: 18 Mar. 2011. Web. 30 Sept. 2011.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is a literature review of selected articles that focus on the basics of grant writing for the benefit of a novice grant writer. The economic downturn has caused significant drop in tax revenue for cities all across the country. With an understanding of the basics of grant writing, city staff with little or no experience can explore new grant funding sources and opportunities.

The selected articles are grouped by topic. First are the articles on grant writing basics to give the reader a foundation of subject matter important to grant writers. Several articles on planning are next which stress the importance of planning at all levels of grant writing. The following topic contains articles discussing the important role grant reviewers play in the process and why understanding their motivations is critical. The next group of articles is focused on the importance of developing a creative ability that goes beyond the fundamentals of grant writing. The last section contains articles on general information beyond fundamentals with such topics as project management, collaboration, and proposal organization.

Grant Writing Basics

Philip Bourne and Leo Chalupa provide a solid foundation for grantsmanship with ten simple rules for getting grants based on their many years of writing both successful and unsuccessful grants. "Ten Simple Rules for Getting Grants" fits well within my topic because it focuses on the basics of grant writing yet has sufficient depth to be beneficial also to experienced grant writers. The structure of the article is the discussion of each of the ten rules in no particular topic order and includes both practical and common sense advice. For example, Bourne and

Chalupa not only emphasize the importance of carefully following the submission guidelines (Rule 4) (59) but also the not so obvious task of enjoying the process and having fun (Rule 1). While the authors state there are no previously unrevealed secrets presented, the article does cover ten key areas of grant writing in a very concise manner. The authors provide the argument that submission guidelines must be carefully followed which is a topic several others make in this paper. Michael Dunlop also uses this theme in "Grant Writing 101" when he says "read the instructions carefully. Many applications are rejected because they are filled out incorrectly" (22).

Nancy Chavkin, in "Funding School-Linked Services through Grants: A Beginner's Guide to Grant Writing," provides the beginning grant writer with guidelines for the process of securing external funding. While the article's focus is on school-linked services, it proposes using a proactive approach focusing on key ingredients of successful proposals. As mentioned in other articles on collaboration, the importance of developing a relationship with the funding agency is emphasized. The main point of the article is to offer key elements of grant writing such as understanding the thinking and values of the funding agency. A key point discussed is importance of separating the need from the solution. For example, a project may require a piece of equipment, but the proposal should focus on the solution offered by having the piece of equipment, not the just the equipment. Chavkin presents a useful diagram of an "upside-down pyramid approach" (4) showing the needs of the project and then describing how meeting those needs will help not only the community, but also the state and even the nation. The article offers some very important foundation information for new and experienced grant writers.

Another excellent article on the basics of grantsmanship is "The Art of Obtaining Grants."
Emily Devine makes a strong case that "proposals can be returned if guidelines are not closely
followed, and reviewers look more favorably upon a proposal written in the required format"
(584).While other articles may focus on one or two elements of grant writing, she maps the entire
grant writing process from beginning to end. She explains the strategies needed to maximize
successful funding and emphasizes the need to stay abreast of the grant-making landscape by
registering with grant funding agencies (582). Devine speaks directly to new grant writers by
suggesting two equally successful strategies for getting started in grant writing: co-write with a
more experienced senior writer or pursue a small grant as a principal investigator or writer (583).
The author advises grant writers to have a strong interest in the requested project in order to
maintain the effort necessary to carry the funding process to completion. This advice ties in with
the need of grant writers to self-assess their professional strengths, expertise, and past
experiences. Acknowledging these strengths allow grant writers to assemble a team with
complementary skills to engender the confidence of the grant funding agency. The author
concludes the article by explaining the varied roles of the grant writer after funding is secured
(586). It fits well within my topic because small municipalities typically do not have experienced
grant writers and the article provides the fundamental knowledge upon which to build a
successful grant writing staff.

In "Grant Money: Where is it and how do I get some of it?" Chris Rhea et al. discuss a
symposium given to students to make them more comfortable with the grant writing process and
to give them insights on how to find funding sources for their projects. The symposium discusses
the basics of finding grant funding among various funding agencies, how to write successful

grants and gives examples of successful, and unsuccessful grant applications. Two graduate students and one first-year professor led the symposium. The article fits within my theme because it goes beyond the fundamentals of grantsmanship and discuses the process of identifying funding sources.

Although "How to Get a Grant Funded" was written for the biomedical research field, there are certain points that can be useful to the general topic of grant writing. For instance, David Goldblatt points out that successful grants require "dogged determination, good organization, and a clear strategy to succeed" (1647). Once again, the topic of following instructions is discussed with the warning that grants that do not comply with the guidelines may be returned unconsidered. The author cites an example of an application being returned because it was "not firmly stapled" (1647).The article includes a helpful sidebar titled "Summary Points" with items such as "Write focused, succinct, clear applications that follow the guidelines" (1647). Goldblatt suggests the grant application should be easily understandable by those who are not experts in the proposed area. This advice is consistent with other articles in this paper and fits with the theme of grant writing basics.

The purpose of "Preparing a Grant Proposal: Some Points for Guidance," by Anthony Mann, is to document a symposium on grant writing the author delivered to teachers so they could teach their students the basics of grant writing. Although the focus is generally on grant funding for scientific research, there is sufficient material in basic grant writing to be of interest. Mann covers the topic of grant proposal introductions by advising to be brief and clear, suggesting that explanations of project scope and purpose that cannot be outlined in one short paragraph probably lack focus (349). Again, the topic of what to do if the funding request is

denied is discussed. Other topics included are succinct but thorough discussions on budgets and ethics. Because the audience is teachers of grant writing, several classroom practical exercises are included.

Carolyn Taylor wrote "Thinking Out of the Box: Fundraising during Economic Downturns" to discuss the potential of new grant funding sources that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 has for academic, public, and school libraries. The author believes "exploring new funding sources becomes a necessity during troubled economic times" (370). This fits with my topic of basic grant writing strategies. The author reminds the reader that the federal government is looked to for relief in solving short-term and long-term budget problems. The emphasis of the article is to provide grant writers with basic website references to get started so that the grant writer can further explore on their own. The intent of the article is to share the author's twenty years experience and provide information that will get the reader thinking in new and creative ways and to "think outside the box" (3). The article includes a lengthy definition and explanation of the ARRA and the resources available at Grants.gov which has an excellent tutorial for beginning grant writers.

The only article that focuses directly on grant writing for municipalities is "Grant Writing 101." Dunlop is the Director of IT for Troy, NY and uses thirteen years of grant successes, and failures, to document the steps needed for successful grant funding. This checklist or "tips" discusses not only what to do, but also what not to do (22). For example, he emphasizes reviewing eligibility guidelines. Dunlop considered submitting a grant application to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation until he found that only municipalities of Washington State were eligible. The information in this article could easily be made into a grant writing checklist for

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any municipality. A suggestion made by the author that was repeated by Bourne and Chalupa covering grant writing basics is the importance of reading and following the grant application very carefully. Because the article stays focused on municipal grant writing, it connects with my topic and other articles covering grant writing basics for this paper.

<p style="text-align:center;"><u>Planning</u></p>

Sally Lusk's article, "Developing an Outstanding Grant Application." focuses on the basics of planning in grantsmanship by making definitive suggestions such as thinking of the proposal as a sales pitch and presenting a "very clear and persuasive proposal, one easy for the reviewers to understand" (367). The main purpose of the article is to have grant writers follow specific suggestions based on the acronymic model of "OUTSTANDING" with each letter representing an important element of the grant writing process. The majority of the article discusses the representative elements of the model. For example, "D" stands for "Document your ability, and your teams' ability, to do the project." Although the article is slightly dated (2004), the fundamentals it discusses are still relevant. The components of the model would serve as a steady reminder of the basic components of grant writing success and the importance of project planning.

Although "Experimental Study Design and Grant Writing in Eight Steps and 28 Questions." by Georges Bordage and Beth Dawson is focused on academic research grants, it provides a detailed step-by-step iterative guideline of developing and completing a grant application that could be adapted to any project. The importance of project planning and budgeting is discussed. This documented guideline approach is similar to that proposed by Lusk in her article "Developing an Outstanding Grant Application." The discussion of ethics is

<p style="text-align:center;">21</p>

appropriate for grant writers at all levels of experience. The article's discussion on the importance of planning is a theme frequently heard in nearly all articles on grant writing. Published in 2003, the basic information is still relevant and fits within my topic of project planning for grant writing.

The purpose of "Get the Gold: A Physical Educator's Guide to Grant Writing," by Dennis Johnson and Tammy Schilling, is to provide guidelines for finding an appropriate funding agency and writing a grant proposal for the particular agency. A significant item included is a sample proposal so the reader can see how all the components fit together. The sample proposal is extensive and has an easy to follow format and structure including a sample detailed timeline. Johnson and Schilling remind the reader to closely follow the grantor's application procedures and if a proposal is rejected, follow up with the grantor and solicit feedback to improve the proposal and resubmit it. The authors also provide some basic advice by breaking down the funding process to three basic steps: locating sources of funding, learning the application procedures and eligibility requirements, and writing and submitting the proposal (48). Although the article is mainly written for physical educators, the primary arguments of planning fundamentals apply to all grant writers.

Another article on grant writing planning is "Winning Grants: A Game Plan" by Herbert Landau. This article, like Taylor's "Thinking Out of the Box: Fundraising during Economic Downturns," focuses on grant funding for libraries. The author believes no outsider can write a grant as effectively as a "library insider" (2) who fully understands the library's mission and priorities as well as the needs of the community. Landau discusses the four common-sense rules that govern his grant writing game plan. Rule one is "mission match" (2) which the author states

as the first rule of grant writing, specifically to pursue only grants that are relevant of the library's mission. This is fundamental advice for grant writers of all levels of experience. The author further explains the importance of matching the library's mission with the grantor's mission and matching the proposed project's mission with the library's mission and grantor's mission. The article also includes an informative section on the relationship of not-for-profit institutions and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Landau returns to the topic of the importance of reliable proposal manager and responsible project team that is discussed by Marilyn Morgan in "Writing the NIH Grant Proposal: A Step-by-Step Guide."

Kenneth Henson uses "The Art of Writing Grant Proposals, Part I" to highlight the successful strategies he developed and used to write a series of successful proposals, so successful that they outperformed all competing proposals for several consecutive years. The main argument is that if these five strategies are followed, additional grants will be funded. Strategy number one is to make a convincing commitment and recognize grant reviewers are astute and demanding. By recognizing and understanding the requirements and goals of the both the grant reviewer and funding agency, grants will have a greater chance of success in an ever increasing field of competing proposals. The author further suggests, in strategy four, that the grant writing staff should make it a practice to become continuous familiar with all available funding sources. The five strategies are a solid guideline of tips for both novice and experienced grant writers and fits well within my theme of grantsmanship planning.

<center>Grant Reviewers</center>

Once the grant is submitted, it is reviewed by grant reviewers who are typically experienced and professional grant writers or specialists in the field the grant is addressing. Robert Porter, in "What do Grant Reviewers Really Want, Anyway?," describes grant reviewers as the "gatekeepers" of the grant funding community and wrote this article so he could learn more of the personal perspectives of experienced grant reviewers (7). By learning the motivations of grant reviewers, grant writers can use that information to their advantage in the application process. Porter documents the review process from the initial meeting to the final decision; important steps that the grant writer needs to fully understand. He state that by understanding and accommodating the review process the grant writer should experience greater success. The author points out the importance of first impressions. For example, one grant reviewer said "if I don't get interested by the first page, the proposal is lost" (11). This advice will serve well both novice and experienced grant writers and fits well within my topic of grant writing basics.

The theme of the importance of understanding what grant reviewers are looking for continues with "The ABCs of Research Grant Writing: The Advice of Two Grant Reviewers." Reflecting on their experience at a recent grant review session, Richard Sontheimer and Paul Bergstresser were struck by the frequency with which certain strategic errors were made in applications by grant writers with little experience (165). This article connects directly with my theme of grant writing basics and provides information continuity with the earlier articles such as Devine's "The Art of Obtaining Grants." The authors are quick to point out that the article is not

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an extensive treatise on grant writing (165). Rather they hope to familiarize novice grant writers with the successful language and styles they have found to be effective and successful. The authors go on to offer an alphabetical checklist from A ("Ambitious") to W ("Work") each detailing the importance and application of each item (168). They admonish the novice grant writers against attempting too much and then being considered by the grant reviewer as "overly" or "too" ambitious. The checklist structure works well for ease of access to information. Again the importance of collaborative efforts is emphasized (166). The alphabetical list is unique, extensive, and complete. Some items, however, that are included may not be intuitively obvious, such as the section on Appearance with its discussion of print size and margins (165). This article is a solid continuation of the grant reviewer topic and adds to the foundation of knowledge needed by a grant writer to succeed with grant reviewers.

The purpose of "Grant Applications: the Art of Science" is to provide insight into the review process as seen by a grant reviewer. Richard Collins is Scientific Review Director for the Hong Kong SAR Government. Again the suggestion is made to read the guidelines and supplementary materials thoroughly. The author also reminds the grant writer to tailor make each grant application; boiler plate responses will be quickly noticed and will probably lead to rejection of the proposal. Another important element, Collins reminds the reader, is to assemble and document the qualifications of the requesting organization for the grant funder. The author advises to include a one-page abstract which should be written last so that it reflects the entire proposal. A six point quick guide checklist is included which provides an easy reference. This article compares with others by stressing the importance of reading and following all procedural material provided by the funding agency.

Victoria Molfese and Karen Karp wrote "Recommendations for Writing Successful Proposals from the Reviewer's Perspective" after a presentation at the 2001 SRA Annual Meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia and reflects the experiences and advice of the three authors who have been successful in obtaining grant funding and who have also acted as grant reviewers for funding agencies. The authors are quick to point out that successful grant applications involve two equally important components: support for the project and communication of the goal to the reviewers. Success often hinges on avoiding common mistakes that distract the reviewers from the best features of the proposal. Molfese and Karp advise that it is essential to know which project ideas get the best marks from the reviewers, which is part of knowing the rules and recognizing what the reviewers' value. The article discusses the affects of non-professional appearance and disorganized proposals on reviewers. The authors remind the reader that reviewers are overworked, but caring individuals. The article fits with my topic because it continues to build on the important role of the grant reviewer and how important it is for the grant writer to understand the entire process.

<center>Creative Ability</center>

In "Writing Effective Federal Grant Proposals," Rita Carty and Mary Cipriano Silva focus on the creative aspects of grant writing. While other articles speak to grant writing basics, this article speaks to the "art" of grant writing; those elements that go beyond the fundamentals. For example, significant discussion is given to the importance of "release time" in which a grant writer is given no other tasks except the task at hand (74). The importance of using grant writers familiar with the project is emphasized, as is the need to have grant writers that have significant self-direction and self-discipline (76). The article includes a documented methodology that

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details a course of action for the achievement of each grant with exact timelines for events to happen. The authors argue the importance of networking by making direct contact with the grant funders. The topic of ethics is also discussed (75). This article fits well within my theme because it builds on the basics covered earlier by both Devine and Dunlop.

The main focus of "Grantsmanship: What makes proposals work?" is to emphasize the importance of innovation in grant writing. Anne Simon Moffat makes a solid point that "the award rate is almost one-half of a decade ago" (1921). Even thought this article was written in 1994, the point is well taken that grant funding has become highly competitive. Moffat discusses how "review panels are bowled over by enthusiasm and clear thinking" (1921). Again, the theme is heard that submission rules must be followed with nearly half of all proposals being returned because they fail to follow the latest format guidelines. While the primary audience for the article is the scientific community of grant writers, this advice would apply to others fields as well and fits well with my topic of fundamental grant writing. Other topics covered are the importance of critical editing, proofreading, references cited, and clear explanation of goals and objectives. Moffat advises write and rewrite. While grants are funded on their merit, that merit has to be communicated in writing (1922).

<div align="center">General Topics</div>

Donna Ford's "Webster's New World Grant Writing Handbook" is a book review which targets technical communicators that aspire to become grant writers. This is significant for my topic because many technical communicators have the basic skills that grant writers will need such as how to prepare outlines, consult SMEs (subject matter experts), manage projects, schedules and deadlines, and work within an organization on collaborative efforts (118). The

author encourages all grant writers, novice and experienced, to develop and maintain personal contacts in various funding organizations. This suggestion on collaboration was mentioned earlier by Carty and Silva. The scope of the book goes beyond what can reasonably be included in an article by including such topics as short concept papers for dissemination within an organization or prospective partners to more formal proposals to submit to funders. The author provides specific guidelines, including optimum page and paragraph counts and explains the typical proposal (119).

Another book review is titled "Writing the NIH Grant Proposal: A Step-by-Step Guide," by Marilyn Morgan. This article reviews the book of the same title by William Gerin. The book is not an introductory work on grant writing in general; it is oriented strictly to the National Institute of Health (NIH) grant process. Morgan reminds the reader of a section in the book that cautions against submitting a proposal before it is ready just to say it is submitted. This is a theme mentioned in "What Do Grant Reviewers Really Want, Anyway?" by Porter regarding proposal completeness and accuracy. The book is organized chronologically beginning with a discussion on organizing the project team and then proceeding through the stages of writing and submitting the proposal. The book covers not only the organizational aspects of the proposal, but also the interpersonal issues involved which fit into my topic of fundamental grantsmanship. The author cautions that the book is slightly out-of-date in the area of electronic submission. In other respects, however, the author states the book is a "thorough treatment of a complex subject that can guide newcomers through the NIH proposal writing process" (215).

"Models of Proposal Planning & Writing" is a book review of the same title written by Jeremy T. Miner and Lynn E. Miner. The article's author, Diane Borgwardt, is a student in the

online PhD program in technical communication and rhetoric at Texas Tech University. Borgwardt discusses how the book explains the framework for creating each section, including work before the actual writing begins. She explains that the first chapter is dedicated to "persuasive writing" (485) noting that novice writers focus on their own agenda and needs rather than the project's goals and the funding agency's priorities. The book discusses a three step analysis to evaluate the proposal based on the known requirements of the funding agency. This is a useful source because it discusses a book that can help a novice grant writer throughout the process.

Many books and articles have been written on the basics of grant writing, but very few focus on the unique and challenging aspects of grant writing for municipalities. Devine's "The Art of Obtaining Grants" and Dunlop's "Grant Writing 101" offer an excellent starting point for the new grant writer to understand the basics of grantsmanship. Bourne and Chalupa continue with the theme of basics in "Ten Simple Rules for Getting Grants" with a discussion of the simple structure of each of the ten rules. The new grant writer should then read Taylor's "Thinking Out of the Box: Fundraising during Economic Downturns." to establish a foundation of locating funding sources via the Internet.

Planning in grant writing is a topic often overlooked and the new grant writer should first read Lusk's article "Developing an Outstanding Grant Application" followed by "Experimental Study Design and Grant Writing in Eight Steps and 28 Questions" by Bordage and Dawson which focuses on an iterative step-by-step approach. This sequence of reading is best finished with "The Art of Writing Grant Proposals, Part I" by Henson.

After the planning of grantsmanship is mastered, the reader should move on to understanding what grant reviewers are looking for as discussed in "The ABCs of Research Grant Writing" by Richard Sontheimer and Paul Bergstresser, and Porter's "What do Grant Reviewers Really Want, Anyway?" An alternative reading sequence would be to read Sontheimer and Bergstresser before any reading on basics to get an initial understanding of what grant reviewers want and read Porter's "What do Grant Reviewers Really Want, Anyway?" after gaining a foundation on grant writing basics.

Grant writing can be considered routine and monotonous by new grant writers. This feeling can be overcome by reading "Writing Effective Federal Grant Proposals" by Carty and Silva which focuses on the creative aspect of grant writing.

The new grant writer should conclude this sequence by reading Ford's *Webster's New World Grant Writing Handbook* because most new grant writers are experienced technical communicators and Ford's book will capitalize on their previous writing experiences.

This sequence of reading and understanding for the new grant writer will form a solid foundation upon which to build through further reading of related grant writing articles. The only definitive work on grant writing for cities is Dunlop's "Grant Writing 101," so the municipal grant writer will have to continue their education through focused research on basic grantsmanship, planning, and grant reviewers and build their own library of books and articles in order to add to their skill set that best fits their grant writing projects.

The following chapter, Chapter 3, will discuss the research methods used to gather and analyze the data from the surveys given to each of the fifteen city managers in Polk County, Florida of cities having a population less than 25,000.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

<u>Introduction</u>

The data for my thesis was gathered through a survey followed by a personal interview with each of the fifteen city managers of the candidate cities in Polk County Florida having less than 25,000 population. Initial contact was made by telephone or U.S. mail to the city managers asking for their cooperation in the study. The survey was then sent to each participant in a method of their choosing either by email, U.S. mail, or via the survey link at www.surveymonkey.com.

The purpose of this chapter is to document the rationale behind each survey question. The survey consists of 37 questions which I considered the maximum before resistance would be felt from the participants because of the length of time needed to complete the survey. See Appendix A for the survey. The survey can be completed in less than 10 minutes.

A follow-up interview was scheduled with each survey participant after the survey was completed. This was done to give me an opportunity to clarify survey answers and to also provide each participant the opportunity to provide additional information and ask related questions. The format of most questions is multiple choice answers with a text box provided for additional comments.

The initial survey questions are designed to provide a foundation of basic information about each city and the background of each city manager. Several of these questions, such as those about name, age, gender, ethnicity, race, and educational level are optional. Answers are required for all other questions in the survey. The next set of questions are designed to gain information about the current attitude each city has towards requesting grants from federal

agencies, corporations, foundations, and non-profits. Towards the middle of the survey, questions are asked about the city's grant writing staff, their training, and the city's use of outside grant writing agencies. Several questions deal with quantifying the number of grants requested and denied for the past three years. These questions are followed by those dealing with the current strategy of how individual departments deal with grant opportunities. The final questions address challenges, obstacles, or problems the city is experiencing with an opportunity to offer solutions.

The overall structure of the survey is to lay the foundation, gather background and information on current grant writing policies and practices, and then close with questions of identifying problems, and provide the opportunity for the participants to offer solutions.

Question 1.

Please identify your city.

- ☐ Auburndale

- ☐ Bartow

- ☐ Davenport

- ☐ Dundee

- ☐ Eagle Lake

- ☐ Fort Meade

- ☐ Frostproof

- ☐ Haines City

- ☐ Highland Park

- ☐ Hillcrest Heights

☐ Lake Alfred

☐ Lake Hamilton

☐ Lake Wales

☐ Mulberry

The results of each of the fifteen cities were uniquely identified so the results can be analyzed.

Question 2.

What is today's date?

In the format DD/MM/YYYY.

Question 3.

What is your name?

This question is optional because some respondents may wish to be anonymous. I will know the name, and position, of each respondent but there could be some that will wish to remain anonymous for professional or personal reasons. Whether the question is answered or not will not affect the survey results.

Question 4.

What is your position in the city?

The respondent to the survey will generally be the City Manager, or in the cities that have a strong mayor form of government, the participant will be the Mayor.

Question 5.

How many years have you been in this position?

This is asked to gain information on the experience level of each participant. Some participants could certainly have many more years of experience than just at their current city, but the survey is about the grant writing policies and practices of the city, not the city manager.

Question 6.

What is your age?

☐ Under 30

☐ 30-39

☐ 40-49

☐ 50 and over

This is the first of several optional questions. The multiple choice format was chosen over requesting a specific age response because it was believed the participant would be more willing to answer the question. The data may prove useful in the analysis phase.

Question 7.

What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

This may also prove beneficial in the analysis phase.

Question 8.

What is your ethnicity?

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Not Hispanic or Latino

The content of this question, and the next, was modeled after the Ethnicity and Race Identification Form 181 used by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management Guide to Personnel Data Standards (www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/sf181.pdf).

Question 9.

What is your race?

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Asian

☐ Black or African American

☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☐ White

Question 10.

What is your highest education level?

☐ Did not complete high school

☐ High school graduate (including GED)

☐ Two years of college or less

☐ More than two years of college (including AA degree)

☐ College graduate (four year)

☐ Some graduate courses

☐ Master's Degree

☐ Doctorate Degree

The answer to this question will be used in the analysis phase. Because this question is optional, some participants will choose to answer and some may not which could leave a skewed analysis.

Question 11.

Do you personally believe grants are beneficial to your city?

☐ Never

☐ Occasionally

☐ Frequently

☐ Always

This subjective question attempts to gain insight into the participant's personal attitude about grants for their city. If the participant has a prior unpleasant experience with grants that is affecting their current judgment or attitude, it would be beneficial to know that going into the analysis phase. A text box is provided for comments.

Question 12.

If you believe grants are NOT beneficial to your city (Question 11), please explain why not.

This optional question provides an opportunity for the participants that believe grants are not beneficial to their city to explain why not. Because answers can be subjective and highly personal, care must be taken in the analysis phase.

The remaining questions all require an answer.

Question 13.

Does your city routinely search for available grant funding for all projects?

☐   Always

☐   Sometimes

☐   Never

This question is included to establish a foundation for later questions. If the answer is "Never", the city does not pursue grant funding for any projects and additional survey questions may not be helpful. In that case, during the follow-up interview, I would ask "Why not." Also, some municipalities may pursue grant funding for only capital improvement, public safety or infrastructure projects, but not all projects. Further questioning should reveal the city's policy or strategy.

Question 14.

Does your city apply for county, state, federal grants, or for all grants (check all that apply)?

☐   County

☐   State

☐   Federal

☐   All

This question is included to help determine the depth and breadth the city goes to for grant opportunities. If the city only goes after county grants, they could be missing opportunities from the state and federal agencies. Likewise, if the city only applies to federal agencies, opportunities at the county and state level could be missed. Ideally, cities should be going for grants at all levels.

Question 15.

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Does your city seek grants from non-profit organizations (501(c)3)?

☐ Never

☐ Sometimes

☐ Frequently

☐ Always

Some cities are not aware of the significant grant opportunities available from non-profit organizations. Although the scope of the project dictates the willingness and interest of the non-profit, diligent research and networking can pay dividends.

Question 16.

Does your city seek grants from foundations?

☐ Never

☐ Sometimes

☐ Frequently

☐ Always

Foundations are in the unique position of having to divest a portion of their assets each year to maintain their legal status. With federal stimulus dollars starting to dry up, partnering with foundations may prove beneficial.

Question 17.

Does your city seek grants from for profit corporations?

☐ Never

☐ Sometimes

☐ Frequently

☐   Always

Many corporations desire to be viewed as good neighbors and citizens, and can make excellent funding sources for municipalities.

Question 18.

Does your city partner with corporations, foundations, or non-profits in grant requests?

☐   Never

☐   Sometimes

☐   Frequently

☐   Always

Partnering with corporations, foundations, or non-profits with a local presence can provide a city with a well-rounded grant writing strategy.

Question 19.

Does your city have a dedicated grant writer on staff?

☐   Yes, full-time

☐   Yes, part-time

☐   No

This question speaks directly to the level of commitment and aggressiveness a city views their grant writing effort. A full-time grant writer indicates that the city is fully committed to finding and pursuing grant opportunities for all projects and from all available funding sources. A full-time grant writer spends part of their time networking and building relationships which is something a part-time grant writer may not be able to do, or not able to do effectively. Another significant advantage of a full-time grant writer is the continuity realized by having a single

person responsible for writing all grants. By knowing the present and future funding needs of the city, the full-time grant writer will be constantly researching all potential funding opportunities. Part-time grant writers typically have other responsibilities within the city. For example, a police officer may apply for grants exclusively for the police department while carrying on their normal duties and assignments. If the response is "No," the participant is asked to explain why not.

Question 20.

What type and how much formal training in grant writing does your staff have?

☐   None

☐   Limited

☐   Extensive

The participant will have an opportunity to provide additional information on the type of training offered to staff in a comment box labeled "Please explain."

Training in grant writing is generally available in three methods: self-taught, classroom, or on-line. Self-taught is common among small cities because budgets are limited and grant writing is usually not given a high priority. Individuals are placed in a position of grant writing with little or no training, and no clear direction. This frequently leads to incomplete applications and missed deadlines. Classroom training is typically 2-6 days and generally involves travel to the training site. Several private organizations offer classroom training as do the major grant writing associations. The American Grant Writers' Association (AGWA) offers a six-day course for $799 which is taught at several locations around the country each year. AGWA also offers an on line course. Because this is a two-part question, the additional information the participant provides in the "Please explain" box will be important as will the personal interview.

Question 21.

Does your city contract to an outside grant writing agency or grant consultant?

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never

Most federal grant funding agencies will not pay a commission for someone to write a grant for a municipality. The prevailing belief is that this is unethical. Several large professional grant writing associations have developed written business ethics and a code of ethics that they encourage their members to follow. Some cities will attempt to bypass this issue by hiring the grant writing consultant as part of the project and give them a title of "grant administrator." If the funding is not provided, the consultant loses their job. The participant can provide additional information in the box labeled "Other."

Question 22.

Before a grant is submitted to a funding source, is the application routinely reviewed by a staff member who is experienced in grant writing other than the author?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

This question will indicate the degree of structure the city follows internally in their grant writing process. If the city has only one part-time grant writer on staff, the answer will probably be 'No' unless the city contracts with an outside consultant. Ideally, a city would have at least two part-time grant writers so one would always be available to review the other's applications.

If there is no review process, incomplete and incorrect applications could be submitted with the likely result of denied funding. Also, unless the errors are corrected, they could show up again in future applications with the same negative results. A box leveled "Additional Comments" is provided for the participant to add additional information.

Question 23.

How many grants has your city applied for and received in the past three years?

☐ 0

☐ 1-3

☐ 4-6

☐ 7-10

☐ 11 or more

This question is a companion question to number 24. The higher the number of grants the more aggressive the city is pursuing grants. Also, the response could be skewed or misleading if the number of grants applied for in each of the last three years is not level. This is the type of information that would be revealed in the follow-up interview.

Question 24.

Please indicate the total amount of grant funding your city has received within the past five years from all sources.

☐ Less than $1 million

☐ $1 million - $2.9 million

☐ $3 million - $4.9 million

☐ $5 million - $9.9 million

☐ $10 million - $19.9 million

☐ $20 million - $29.9 million

☐ $30 million - $49.9 million

☐   Over $50 million

This question is intended to place a quantitative value on the dollar amount of grants that have been funded. The analysis phase would show the correlation between the number of grants received and the corresponding dollar amounts.

Question 25.

How many grants has your city applied for and NOT received within the past three years?

☐   0

☐   1-3

☐   4-6

☐   7-10

☐   11 or more

A high number would indicate a less efficient grant writing strategy. Conversely, a low number would indicate an efficient strategy. This question is tied to the previous question because without considering both responses the response to this question could be misleading. For example, a response of 1-3 would have a different meaning based on the number of total grants the city applied for. If the city applied for 30 grants and was declined on 2 of those, that would not be as significant as being declined on 2 grant applications out of 4 requests.

Question 26.

Please indicate the total amount of grant funding your city applied for and did NOT receive within the past five years from all sources.

- ☐ Less than $1 million

- ☐ $1 million - $2.9 million

- ☐ $3 million - $4.9 million

- ☐ $5 million - $9.9 million

- ☐ $10 million - $19.9 million

- ☐ $20 million - $29.9 million

- ☐ $30 million - $49.9 million

- ☐ Over $50 million

This question is intended to place a quantitative value on the dollar amount of grants that have not been funded. The analysis phase would show the correlation between the number of grants denied and the corresponding dollar amounts.

Question 27.

If any grant request was denied funding within the past five years from any source, please indicate the reason for denial. Check all that apply.

- ☐ Missed deadline

- ☐ Incomplete application

- ☐ Inaccurate application

- ☐ Did not follow guidelines

- ☐ Did not follow directions

- ☐ Other

This question will identify the reasons for grant denial which will be discussed in the analysis phase. A text box is provided for additional comments.

Question 28.

Does your city have grant writing policies established by the council or commission?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Many cities do not have written policies on applying for grants. Often this is because the council or commission does not feel having such a policy is necessary. Sometime, even though it may be felt important, it's not something the council has gotten around to taking care of. Some grants require matching funds, and cash strapped cities may choose to not pursue funding from these types of grants until the economy improves. Many grants require the city to accept some form of responsibility, such as maintenance and upkeep that the city is not able or willing to do. Ethical policy concerns could involve not applying for grants where the funding sources are tied to an industry that the council feels inappropriate, or possibly offensive, such as tobacco or alcohol. A text box is provided for the participant to explain the city's policy.

Question 29.

Does each department, such as Police and Fire, write its own grants?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

Some cities, such as Lake Wales, have command staff (Assistant Chief of Police in the case of Lake Wales) prepare and submit all grants for the police department. This has the

advantage of the grant writer being focused on the needs of their department, but the disadvantage of not having that person well versed on all grant opportunities. An alternative strategy for small cities with limited staff may be to have one individual, even though part-time, designated as the final reviewer for the city before any grant is submitted. Another concern with the part-time approach is that the individual can easily get priorities redirected and grant opportunities can be missed. A text box is provided for additional comments.

Question 30.

In what areas does your city apply for grants (check all that apply)?

☐ Public Safety

☐ Recreation

☐ Infrastructure

☐ Economic development

☐ Education

☐ Housing

☐ Other

This question is included not only to determine in what areas grants are currently applied for, but also to set in motion the thought processes of the participant about other areas that could be considered. Frequently, one grant opportunity will lead to another in an adjacent area. For example, in Lake Wales, a grant application is being developed for a Community Policing Substation in a depressed area of town. The grant will provide funds for construction, operation, and maintenance of the building. Once the building is constructed, additional grant opportunities exist for economic development and education using the same facility. Areas within the building

could be used for business incubators, and classes could be offered to help citizens obtain their GED, all of which grant opportunities are available. A text box is provided for additional information.

Question 31.

Do you have the assistance of an outside company or agency continuously searching for grant opportunities?

☐ Yes, always

☐ Yes, sometimes

☐ No

Grant writing has been described as a two-part process. The first part is finding the money and the second part is managing how the money is spent which typically includes some measure of reporting back to the funding agency. This question addresses the first part of the process. There are software programs that will continuously search federal, state, and private grant databases for open grants based on search parameters provided to the program. Because the number of search parameters is limited, they are continuously updated. For example, a search program available from Polk County for cities within the county will search a maximum of six parameters at a time. This service is available to each city for an annual fee. Each subscribing city can change their search parameters whenever needed based on current needs. Not all cities are aware of this service provided by the county. Lake Wales was not and when told about it the city manager declined to subscribe saying it was too expensive. Lake Wales, as many other small cities in Polk County, does not have a formal grant writing staff and spends limited resources on grant opportunities. A text box is provided for additional comments.

Question 32.

Have you found grant funding to be beneficial to your city?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

This is a companion question to Question 11. The follow-up interview will shed additional light on the answer. If the answer is "Yes" the follow-up question is "How has it been beneficial?" If the answer is "No", the follow-up question is "Why not? What hasn't worked?" If the answer is "Sometimes", the follow-up question is "Please explain". A city that has never applied for a state or federal grant would answer "No" in which case the follow-up question would just be "Why not?"

Question 33.

What challenges or obstacles have you experienced, are experiencing, or anticipate experiencing in applying for grants?

This question is intended to open up a dialogue with the participant. The purpose is to find out what is working and what is not. This question will also be an important topic in the follow-up interview. I would imagine the answer will be broad and far reaching. If the city is frustrated in their grant application process, this question should begin to explore the reasons. The problems, if any, may be information, operational, or philosophical. Bad experiences with grant writing may be caused by not having the current and correct information on funding sources or available education for staff. Not understanding the importance of networking and the reasons why networking is important could be an issue. Differences in attitudes regarding policy

towards applying for grants by the council or commission may be stressful. This question, and the following discussion, is vital to understanding the attitude each participant city has towards grant funding.

Question 34.

What additional assistance, if any, would you like to receive that would help your city in obtaining grants?

This question is intended to continue with an open discussion of what is needed by the city in the form of additional assistance. The previous survey questions should encourage the participant to evaluate the current grant writing program at their city and start thinking about possible changes.

Question 35.

What are the primary problems your city is experiencing in obtaining grants?

This is a companion question to Question 34 and is intended to have the participant focus on problems in obtaining grants. At this point the survey is nearly completed and the questions have covered nearly all aspects of grant writing as implemented in their city. The participant should be able to focus on key problems that need to be addressed.

Question 36.

What solutions can you offer, or would like to see implemented, that would address these problems.

This question is the follow-up to Question 35 by describing solutions to problems just identified. Expansion and elaboration can take place during the follow-up interview.

Question 37.

Please provide any additional comments issues, or concerns regarding grant writing for your city that were not covered in the previous questions.

This is the final question and is intended to be a capstone where the participant can discuss and reflect on all aspects of grant writing for their city. This question, and answer, will also be discussed in the follow-up interview.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, will discuss the responses received on each question. The discussion covers the topics of respondent demographics, grant fundamentals, staff, policy, challenges, and solutions.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction

The problem facing many grant writers of small municipalities is the lack of a definitive strategy or methodology that focuses on their specific needs related to grant application and grant administration. As part of this thesis, I prepared and distributed a survey to all fifteen cities in Polk County Florida having a population less than 25,000. Of the fifteen surveys sent out, there were fourteen responses. All fourteen responses were 100% completed.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the results of the survey questions. The key descriptive points covered in this chapter, and supported by responses to the survey questions, are respondent demographics, grant fundamentals, staff, policy, challenges, and solutions.

The appendices at the end of this study include the survey shown in Appendix A, Grant Writing Policies and Practices Survey, and the responses to the survey questions shown in Appendix B, Response Data which consists of 34 pie charts and graphs labeled Figure 1 to 34. Table 3, Survey Information by City, included at the end of this chapter provides detailed information on the contact information for each city and the various dates each city was contacted. The range of response dates was from 10 June 2011 to 2 August 1011.

Several survey questions provided the opportunity for the respondent to add additional information or clarify their response in a Comment box. Those comments, where appropriate, are included in narrative format.

Respondent Demographics

The average tenure of all respondents in their current position in their respective cities is 6.5 years (refer to Figure 1, Years in Position). Half of the respondents have the title of City Manager. One respondent has the title of Town Manager although after discussing her duties, the position sounded very similar to that of a City Manager. See Figure 2, Respondents Position with the City for further details. The average age of respondents is in the 40-49 range although the largest group is respondents over 50 years. This question was optional and thirteen respondents included their age. Figure 3, Age of Respondents shows the details of the responses. A small majority of respondents are female (53.8%, 7 respondents are female; 46.2%, 6 respondents are male; refer to Figure 4, Gender of Respondents for details). This question was optional and, again, thirteen respondents answered. The questions of ethnicity and race revealed that no respondents were Hispanic or Latino, and all were "White." Figures 5, Ethnicity of Respondents, and 6, Race of Respondents, show the details. Over half of the respondents have a Master's Degree (see Figure 7, Education Level of Respondents). All have at least a high school education and twelve of the thirteen respondents have at least some college.

Grant Fundamentals

Fifty percent of respondents felt grants were "Always" beneficial to their city and the other fifty percent felt grants were either "Frequently" or "Occasionally" beneficial as shown in Figure 8, Percentage of Cities Believing Grants Are Beneficial. No respondent felt grants were "Never" beneficial even though one respondent commented their city has never applied for a grant. Additional comments showed a theme of concern over requirements of matching monies and availability of money for maintenance, repair, or replacement of equipment purchased with

the grant proceeds. A further concern expressed by one respondent was the need to maintain additional personnel hired to operate and maintain the grant purchased equipment after the grant money was spent. They stated that additional personnel could place a financial strain on future budgets for their city.

No respondents felt grants were "Never" beneficial, and there were no responses to Question 12 asking why grants were "Not" beneficial to their city.

A significant majority of cities (85.7%, 12 respondents) responded that they routinely search for grants for all projects (see Figure 9, Percentage of Cities That Routinely Search For Grants For All Projects for details), although this response could be somewhat misleading because several cities commented that contracted engineers actually do the searching. Such a strategy could suggest that these engineering firms may only look for grant opportunities that benefit a particular project for which they are contracted, and ignore other funding opportunities which may be beneficial to the city. One city commented that only projects with the highest priority and need were researched, a strategy that could prove limiting because grants typically take several years to process the application and related paperwork. Therefore, if anticipated projects several years out are ignored, the window of opportunity may have closed when the project does reach a higher priority.

A large majority of respondents (85.7%, 12 respondents) stated they routinely apply for all federal, state, and local grants (refer to Figure 10, Grant Application by Type of Government Source), suggesting a level of aggressiveness that may not be present. Having outside firms, such as engineers or other contractors, responsible for any level of searching may leave the city with missed opportunities. Two cities added comments of "None" indicating they never apply for

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government grants. The possible reasons for never applying for government grants are discussed later in this thesis under "Policy."

The majority of cities (64.3%, 9 respondents) responded "Never" when asked if they seek grants from non-profit (501(c)3) organizations and 71.4% (10 respondents) from foundations. Figures 11, Percentage of Cities Seeking Grants from Non-Profits and Figure 12, Percentage of Cities Seeking Grants from Foundations show the details. Several cities commented they were not aware of this funding source, suggesting potentially significant missed grant opportunities. However, one city commented on the success they had with a non-profit organization funding gymnasium equipment, library materials, and a museum project. Another city listed the foundation by name that had funded various projects in their city. Not pursuing grants from non-profits or foundations could suggest grant opportunities are not being consistently pursued by all cities interested in this funding source.

A larger number of cities seek grants from for-profit corporations (51.7%, 8 respondents) than from non-profits (35.7%, 5 respondents) or foundations (28%, 4 respondents) as shown in Figure 13, Percentage of Cities Seeking Grants from For-Profit Corporations. Again, one city was not aware of this funding source. Another city that was aware of funding opportunities from for-profit corporations cited several projects funded by local businesses, or local stores of national chains, noting the grants were typically small, in the range of $500 to $2,500.

Another potential source of grant funding for cities is developing a partnership between the city and corporations, foundations, or non-profits. Partnerships are relevant and important because many funding sources look favorably on grant applications from cities that have community stakeholders. Community alliances show the funding agency that the city has

community partners that also believe in the importance of the project and are willing to make a commitment in its success which enhances the possibility of getting the project funded. Figure 14, Percentage of Cities Seeking Grant Partners details the responses to this question. A significant majority of cities (64.3%, 9 respondents) responded they never consider partnerships as a strategy, although one city did include a long list of successful partnership projects in their city.

The volume of grants applied for is shown in Figure 15, Number of Grants for Which Cities Applied. Half of the respondents have applied for 11 or more grants in the past 5 years. One city commented the only grant they had applied for was for playground equipment while another city had not applied for any grant funding in the past five years. The data suggests that cities are either very aggressive in grant applications (50% responded 11 or more) or moderately aggressive with 29% (4 respondents) receiving 1-3 grants within the past five years. The variance in the relative aggressiveness could be due to changes in city policy regarding grants, turnover in city management, or turnover in staff experienced in searching for grants and other funding sources.

The amount of money received within the past five years was less than $2.9 million for the majority of the cities (see Figure 16, Amount of Grant Money Received). The response data indicates two major response groups; one group representing 57.1% (8 respondents) having applied for $2.9 million or less, and another somewhat smaller group representing 35.7% (5 respondents) having applied for between $5 million and $19.9 million. Only one city (7.1%) had applied for grants between $3 million and $4.9 million. Another city commented a large CDBG

grant of $1.5 million may dilute their response because they normally receive about $100,000 in recurring grants annually.

The amount of money applied for and not received is shown in Figure 17, Number of Grants for Which Cities Applied and Did NOT Receive. While the majority of cities (86%, 12 respondents) have applied for and NOT received grants, the data suggests two cities (14%) are aggressively pursuing grants. With a large percentage of cities being denied grants, a possible further study could be suggested to further analysis why such a large amount of grants are denied. One city commented some grants were approved but never funded due to lack of funds from the funding source. The majority of the cities responded that the amount of grant money NOT received was less than $1 million as shown in Figure 18, Amount of Grant Money NOT Received.

The major reasons for grant denial are shown in columnar chart format (see Figure 19, Reasons for Grant Denial). A different chart format was chosen to better illustrate the point that none of the possible answers from Question 27 were appropriate. All responses were in the "Other" category. The comments included in "Other" are shown in the Column Chart, Figure 20 Other Reasons for Grant Denial. The most cited reason for grant denial was "Funding Not Available" from the funding source which could be caused by the cutback in stimulus money from the federal government. "Low Score" and "Low Ranking" are similar in definition and mean the city had a lower overall score or ranking when compared to other grant applicants. Another stated reason was "Guidelines Not Met" meaning the city did not meet the guidelines stated in the grant application which are usually rigid with little flexibility. When a governing or administering body, such as Congress or the State Legislature, delay or cancel a previously

appropriated funding opportunity through a change in the law, the applicants generally receive a "Funding Delayed" notice. Several cities commented on the frustration of receiving these notices because of resources committed and monies already spent.

Most grants are applied for in the areas of public safety, recreation, infrastructure, and economic development; refer to Figure 21, Areas of Grant Application. Additional "Other" comments included "library" from two cities and "historic preservation and energy efficiency" from one city. The data suggests that the core services provided by a city are receiving the greatest attention and priority from city grant writers. An ongoing challenge during difficult economic times is the constant deferral of maintenance and repairs on infrastructure projects. A maintenance deferral strategy may actually work to the advantage of some cities because the size of the repair project becomes large enough to qualify for funding when less expensive projects would not, and the dire circumstances may promote the status of the grant applicant. In one case, the repair and replacement of underground sewer pipes has been deferred for many years resulting in ruptured and broken sewer pipes and standing sewage in resident's yards. A description of the situation was included in the grant application which caused the application to receive a higher priority from the funding source.

<div align="center">Staff</div>

A significant majority (86%; 12 respondents) do not have full-time grant writers on staff. One city (7% of respondents) has a full-time grant writer and one city has a part-time grant writer. Several of the cities that answered "No" indicated budget constraints with comments like "staff funding issues," "cost," "budget limitations," and "cannot afford one." One respondent included the comment "not enough grants being applied for." Another respondent commented

that "everyone helps." The response data is shown in Figure 22, Percentage of Grant Writers on Staff.

Formal staff training in grant writing was "None" for 6 respondents (43%) and "Limited" for another 6 cities. Two cities stated their grant writing staff has "Extensive" formal training. Several cities commented there was no money in the budget for staff training in grant writing. Another indicated they work with outside resources including Grants Alliance of Polk County and Florida League of Cities. Another commented on their use of webinars for local training to avoid significant travel costs. Refer to Figure 23, Grant Training of Staff for details.

The majority of cities stated they either "Always" (28.6%, 4 respondents) or "Sometimes" (35.7%, 5 respondents) contract with an outside grant writing agency or grant consultant as shown in Figure 24, Percentage Cities Contract With Outside Agencies. The remaining cities (35.7%, 5 respondents) stated they "Never" contract with an outside agency. The comments from three respondents indicated they use outside agencies primarily for CDBG grants, which can be very time consuming in the application process and in grant administration. One city indicated they consult with Polk County Housing Development for assistance. Most professional grant writing associations, such as the American Grant Writers' Association, have stated in their by-laws that charging a commission for their services is unethical. However, because of the current difficult economic times, this is generally ignored by most cities and professional grant writers.

Forty-three percent (6 respondents) responded "Yes" when asked if a grant application was routinely reviewed by an experienced grant writer on staff before being submitted; 36% (5 respondents) replied "No' and 21% (3 respondents) answered "Sometimes" as shown in Figure

25, Percentage of Time Grants Are Reviewed by Staff Before Being Submitted. One city commented all grants are reviewed by the city planner and city attorney. One city commented they submit grants only to agencies that fund automatically based on formula or positive past experience. Another commented all grants are approved by the respective department head, city manager, and ultimately the city commission. The data would suggest there is no clear consistent strategy in the grant review process.

A small majority (57%; 8 respondents) have individual departments, such as police and fire, write their own grants, suggesting grant writing is not centralized within the city. Two respondents commented their police and fire service is provided by the county. In one such instance, the CDBG money was given to the local volunteer fire department. Another city offered a lengthy comment that in addition to police and fire writing their won grants, the utility department and airport uses engineering consultants in addition to staff to find and write grants. The city museum and library of the same city write their own grants. The part-time grant writer on staff in this city works closely with each department to provide support services. The response data is shown in Figure 26, Percentage of Departments That Write Their Own Grants.

Most cities ((57.1%, 8 respondents) do not have an outside company or agency continuously searching for grant opportunities. Four cities (28.6%) answered "Yes, sometimes" and two cities (14.3%) responded "Yes, always." Continuously searching for grant opportunities can be perceived as relatively expensive for cities, especially during the current difficult economic times. A partnership proposal involving several cities in Polk County was presented to one city that would have cost each participant $1,000 a year for a continuous search, and it was turned down as too expensive. Another city included the name of the outside company doing the

continuous search. The details of the response are shown in Figure 27, Percentage of Cities That Have Outside Agency Continuously Searching.

<div align="center">Policy</div>

A significant majority (93%; 13 respondents) have no formal grant writing policy from the city commission or council, as shown in Figure 28, Percentage of Cities Having Grant Writing Policies Established by Council. Two cities responded with comments that while there was no formal policy on grant writing, the council was generally supportive. Another two cities commented that all grants required the approval of the commission, suggesting a tacit approval. The data suggests most city commissions do not take a proactive role or attitude about grant writing, leaving grant writing policy decisions up to staff. A hesitant or non-committal attitude of the city commission or council could be a disadvantage to a city over the longer term because as elected officials and staff change, current and future projects requiring grant funding may not receive the continuous monitoring and administration provided by a clearly stated policy. Also, a lax or misunderstood policy could leave a new commission or council being unaware of the status of active and pending grant projects.

<div align="center">Challenges</div>

A significant majority (71%; 10 respondents) indicated they have found grants to be beneficial to their city, as shown in Figure 29, Percentage of Cities That Have Found Grants To Be Beneficial. One city commented that staff and elected officials need to be cautious that future monies for ongoing maintenance need to be considered when applying for grants.

The data in Figure 30, Challenges and Obstacles, suggests the most difficult challenge faced by cities is the matching of funds. Not all grants require matching, but for those grants that

do, the challenge appears significant. Timing and forecasting are also involved in grant matching. Because grants are funded several months, sometimes years, after the application is submitted and approved, matching funds need to be allocated at the time of application. Emergency projects can sometimes necessitate the use of these matching funds on essential core services, such as a repair to a water treatment plant. Some respondents included more than one challenge or obstacle in their comment leading to a total of more than 14 answers even though there are only 14 respondents.

The next most significant challenge is finding grant opportunities. The survey data suggests there is not one definitive strategy to find grant opportunities. Some cities use internal departments, some use staff dedicated either part or full-time to find grant opportunities, some use outside contractors, and some use an outside agency or service. The absence of a coherent, well defined strategy would indicate an entrepreneurial opportunity for a collaborative effort of all interested cities.

The topic of "competition" is seen as a significant challenge by at least two cities. With the reduction of stimulus money available from the federal government, grants have become highly competitive. More cities are applying for fewer dollars meaning only those cities with the highest need and most qualified based on the funder's criteria will be funded.

Citizen income can be an issue for grant qualification for some municipalities. Two cities responded that their citizen income was too high to qualify for many grants leaving them with the task of finding grants in which citizen income is not a qualify criteria. City population is one of the criteria of most funding agencies. In the case of one city, their population was, in their

opinion, too small to qualify and they chose not apply for any grants. Policy of the city commission was keeping another city from pursuing grants.

Several issues, although less frequently mentioned, are a concern to a number of cities. The grant application process, which can be tedious and sometimes boring to staff, was given as a challenge by one city. Most grants require a long term reporting process after funding, even after the projects are completed which can a challenge and time consuming, as indicated by several cities. Such a requirement especially becomes a problem when the various departments within the city apply for and administer grants because of other staff duties and responsibilities. The high cost of grant implementation was indicated by one city. Grants require justification by the requestor in the form of requirement letters, testimonials, proclamations, construction plans if applicable, and income and expense documents. These requirements can be a daunting task for a city already short on staff and resources.

When the respondents answered the question of what additional assistance, if any, they would like to receive that would help their city in obtaining grants, two responses stood out from all the rest. Six cities stated "Better awareness of funding sources" as their top priority in getting additional assistance which may reflect on the fragmentation of responsibility for grant searching between various departments and outside sources. The responses are detailed in Figure 31, Additional Assistance Needed.

Another area of equal need for assistance is the "ability to scan budgets and projects." During several interviews, it was suggested a service be provided (one for which a city would pay) that would scan relevant documents, such as commission minutes, capital improvement plans, and financial plans for projects that may be candidates for grant funding based on the

city's demographics. Such a request connects with the other expressed assistance need of "Better awareness of grant availability." Both requests connect with the opportunity, as mentioned earlier, of providing a service of matching city needs with available funding sources.

An additional area of requested assistance is the requirement to have projects "shovel ready" before grant funding. The requirement of being "shovel ready" is not always the case, but when it is it can place a burden on an already cash strapped municipal budget. "Shovel ready" basically means that all pre-planning and pre-construction project tasks must be completed before funding. Such a requirement potentially presents a problem for the city because funds and resources must be committed, sometimes spent, before there is a guarantee the project will be approved by the funding source. If the grant application is not approved by the funding source, the city is left in the awkward situation of having spent money on a "bridge to nowhere' project." In discussions during the interviews with these cities, they are looking for some relief from this requirement. Another area of similar need for assistance is indicated in the response "Projects ready before grants submitted."

Somewhat surprisingly, the city which does not apply for grants responded they needed no additional assistance.

The requirement of matching funds is an ongoing concern for all cities, and one city indicated it is an important area of needed assistance. Because not all grants require matching, it is possible to counsel against applying for grants that have matching requirements, focusing only on those that do not. Also, a better awareness of the types of possible matching may be beneficial. Matching requirements can usually be met with in-kind services such as donated

assets (even land) or labor. The comment of "Financial help with matching funds" suggests a similar need.

One city responded with a need for more funding sources. During the interview, they mentioned they were not aware of possible funding sources from non-profits, foundations, and for-profit corporations.

Although only one city commented in the survey on the need of "sharing workload with other cities," the idea was mentioned by several cities during the interview which would again suggest a need for a consortium or alliance of cities with similar needs. Assistance from the Central Florida Regional Planning council was suggested by one city. During interviews with this and other cities, it was suggested that assistance from other support agencies would be helpful, such as Florida League of Cities and Polk Grants Alliance.

The by-laws of nearly every professional grant writing association prohibits collecting a commission paid to the grant writer based on the amount requested. While every city understands the ethical reason for this article in the by-laws, nearly every city also recognizes the reality of not having the money and resources to have a grant writer, full-time or part-time, on staff, and the cities are willing to pay a reasonable commission to a grant writer based on the amount of money funded. In other words, they are willing to ignore the by-laws of the various grant writing organizations to get the job done.

The two primary problems facing cities are matching funds and lack of personnel resources, as shown in Figure 32, Primary Problems. Again, several cities identified multiple problems in their answer so the total responses analyzed and included in Figure 31 exceed the

number of respondents. The data suggests the problem of matching funds is a significant concern for cities, as is the lack of staff to write and administer grants.

The response of "funding availability" was discussed during the interviews, and this relates to lack of funding at the city because of budget constraints, not the funding source. The concern over "competition" was discussed earlier in the Challenges section and this relates to the greater competitiveness among candidate cities because less grant money is available.

Other primary problems experienced by cities in applying for grants were mentioned before: city council policy, funding source reduction, size (population) of the city, ability to meet qualifications, too much paper work, income of residents too high, and lack of awareness of grants. An additional concern was expressed by one city in the comment: "level of city debt." Both the amount of debt carried by a city, and the amortization of the debt, can be a concern because of the qualifications and funding criterion imposed by funding agencies; if a city has too much debt for a long period of time, the city is looked upon as a bad risk.

<div align="center">Solutions</div>

When asked what solutions can be offered, respondents for four cities responded "Nothing." Three responded that increased funding would be a solution, adding that the reference was to increase project funding by the city, not the funding agencies. Refer to Figure 33, Solutions Offered for details. The response, and reference, reflects directly on the economy. In better economic times, when more revenue from ad valoreum taxes is available, more money is available for maintenance and capital improvement projects. When the economy is struggling, as is the current situation, cities are forced to cut back on all projects, even core services like public safety. Better long range planning was mentioned by one city. During the interview, long

range planning was further defined as a need to plan ahead for projects needing grant funding and start the grant application earlier in the cycle. A collaborative effort by other cities was cited as a possible solution, something mentioned earlier in this paper. Another city commented on a similar concept and called it "Network with peers." These comments are connected to the comment by one city of "more staff." One city commented on a need to pay grant consulting firms on commission only. Most professional grant writing associations have by-laws prohibiting the practice of paying commissions to grant writers based on the amount of money requested or funded, although the by-laws are frequently ignored by most cities. A somewhat common practice is to include the grant writer's fee in the amount requested and label the expense item as a "management" or "consultant fee."

The concept of "review panels" was suggested by one city which connects with the suggestion of collaborative efforts by participating cities and supports the concept of peer review. The disadvantage to a collaborative peer review effort, especially when the peer review is done by neighboring cities, touches on the competitive nature of grants. In a competitive situation, it may not be realistic to expect one grant participant to make suggestions that would enhance the position of another city with the possible outcome of the grant reviewer not getting funded. It may be necessary to install procedures against such a scenario. Again the suggestion of "no match requirements" was made and hopes of an improved economy. The use of Grants Alliance of Polk County was again offered as a solution.

A final question asking for additional comments is detailed in Figure 34, Additional Comments. Although some answers were essentially repeats of those seen earlier, several stood out as new and unique. The response of "Reduce cost to outsource" could be a reflection on the

perceived relative cost of paying a commission to grant writers. One city commented "More business infrastructure in town" which may be accomplished with grants for economic development. Several cities again commented on the need for help with grant application and administration. One city included a comment to not be concerned if a grant is denied. In the interview, I asked the city manager to clarify the comment. Basically, the view was to learn and go on, and not let one denial alter an otherwise effective grant writing strategy of the city. The comment of making CDBG grant allocation by state and not county could be an item for Chapter 5. Better monitoring of needs and better matching of needs to available funds was mentioned again by several cities. Better communication with state legislators was suggested by one city and could also be a topic for Chapter 5.

The following chapter, Chapter 5, further analyzes the data collected from the survey and discusses possible areas of additional study. The data suggests further studies could be beneficial in the areas of collaborative efforts and review panels, a program or procedure to provide better connection and awareness between the needs of a city and grant opportunities, and a better understanding of the requirements and alternatives of matching funds. Further research is needed to explore the best methodology to provide cities better awareness of agencies able to offer assistance, better understanding of why grants are being denied, more effective strategies in working with contracting firms, and better working relationships with elected county and state officials. The closing chapter will also discuss the implications of what could happen if the results of this study are ignored and nothing is changed.

Table 3

Survey Information by City

City	City Manager's Name	Date Survey Sent	Date Survey Completed	Date First Reminder Sent	Date Second Reminder Sent	Date of Interview	Notes:
Auburndale	Robert R. Green	6-Jun-11	10-Jun-11	9-Jun-11		1-Jul-11	
Bartow	George A. Long	6-Jun-11	2-Aug-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	9-Aug-11	
Davenport	Amy Arrington	6-Jun-11	13-Jun-11	9-Jun-11		7-Jul-11	
Dundee	Andy Stewart	6-Jun-11	10-Jun-11	9-Jun-11		8-Jul-11	
Eagle Lake	Peter Gardner	6-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	9-Aug-11	
Fort Meade	Fred Hilliard	6-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	9-Aug-11	
Frostproof	Tenny R. Croley	6-Jun-11	1-Aug-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	23-Jun-11	Sent email for meeting 23Jun or 24Jun; TW Tenny 1Jul - resent link
Haines City	Ken Sauer	6-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	9-Jun-11		1-Jul-11	
Highland Park	Blair Updike Deputy Clerk; Brian Updike City Manager	6-Jun-11	8-Jul-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	8-Jul-11	Interview with Blair Updike
Hillcrest Heights	Larry Blackwelder, Clerk	6-Jun-11	2-Aug-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	2-Aug-11	
Lake Alfred	Larry Harbuck	6-Jun-11	9-Aug-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	9-Aug-11	22Jun11 LMTC
Lake Hamilton	Kimberly Gay	6-Jun-11	1-Aug-11	9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11	1-Aug-11	
Lake Wales	Judith Delmar	6-Jun-11	10-Jun-11	9-Jun-11		7-Jul-11	
Mulberry	Frank R. Satchel	6-Jun-11		9-Jun-11	1-Jul-11		
Polk City	Matt Brock	6-Jun-11	29-Jun-11	9-Jun-11		29-Jun-11	15Jun11 TW Matt says will do survey

Abbreviations in Notes Column: TW: Talked With; LMTC: Left Message To Call

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Introduction

This thesis has investigated the grant writing policies and practices of municipalities in Polk County Florida having a population of less than 25,000. This final chapter consists of 5 sections which includes an overview of the entire study, a review of the findings from the survey completed by 14 of the 15 municipalities meetings the population criterion, conclusions based on the research, suggestions on what should be done and how it should be done, and suggestions on areas of further research.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify and document the grant writing policies and practices of municipalities in Polk County Florida having a population of less than 25,000. The method used to gather information about the grant writing practices was a survey which consisted of 37 questions. The survey was sent to all 15 cities in Polk County meeting the population criterion. Fourteen cities completed and returned the survey. All returned surveys were 100% complete. The focus of the study is smaller municipalities because larger cities generally have a dedicated grant writing staff that continuously monitors projects and needs making larger cities more proactive and aggressive in their grant writing practices. Small cities usually do not have a dedicated grant writing staff. The study is needed now because cities are continuing to deal with lower tax revenue from decreased property values. With dwindling tax

revenues in the face of a stubborn recession, sharpening the grant writing skills could prove beneficial as a means to help equipment replacement and capital improvement projects.

The responses to the survey questions revealed some unexpected topics, to be discussed in this chapter. The suggestions may prove beneficial to the city's grant writing strategies and establish a new set of best practices.

Findings

The response data regarding respondent demographics is presented in Chapter 4. A brief summary is included here. The average tenure of the respondents is 6.5 years. The majority have either the title or responsibilities of City Manager. The average age is in the 40-49 range, although the largest group is over 50 years old. A small majority are female. No respondents were Hispanic or Latino, and all were Caucasian. Over half of the respondents have a Masters Degree. All have at least a high school education and twelve of the thirteen respondents have at least some college. There appears to be no correlation between the respondent demographics and responses to the survey questions, although this could be the focus of a future study.

The majority of respondents believe grants to be beneficial to their city, although the data suggests more awareness of grant opportunities from nontraditional sources, such as foundations, non-profits, and for-profit corporations could be advantageous. No city felt that grants were never beneficial, although one city had never applied for a grant.

The area of matching funds is one of considerable concern and misunderstanding for many cities. The concern over matching funds is that the matching funds need to be set aside at the time of grant application based on the requirements of the funding agency. Because grants are funded many months after application, cities must place the matching funds in a reserve

account making the money unavailable for any other purpose. This approach requires careful

long range financial planning which can quickly be modified with an emergency situation

needing the matching funds held in reserve. An area of misunderstanding regarding matching

funds deals with the types of matching. Matching funds required from the city can be as a

percentage of the total grant, generally 10% to 50%, or by in-kind services, such as donated tools

and equipment, volunteer labor, and even land and buildings.

Many cities suggested a program of collaboration in several areas of grant writing. A

collaborative effort could share the workload, especially in the area of grant research, across

several cities and also help relieve the problem of lack of personnel resources. Closely connected

to collaboration is the concept of peer reviews, or review panels. Grants prepared by the staff of

one city would be reviewed by the staff of another city for points such as completeness,

accuracy, and adhering to application guidelines.

Depending on contractors as a significant source of grant funding for a project could be a

disadvantage because the city is neither responsible nor accountable for the grant searching

process done by the contractor, and funding opportunities may be missed. Contractors would

appear to have no incentive to search for grants for projects in which they are not involved.

Cities working with outside agencies that perform grant searching in addition to grant

writing are also at a potential disadvantage because the agency is searching only for grants that

have been identified to the agency by direct communication with city staff. This approach leaves

open the possibility of missed communication and therefore missed grant opportunities.

Several respondents mentioned that the grant application process was tedious and time

consuming, and they suggested they would be receptive to an alternative process that could save

staff time and the city money. The primary concern expressed by these managers was the time needed by staff to continuously search for grants. Staff felt they did not have adequate time to properly pursue grant opportunities. The concern could be lessened by better awareness by staff of all funding sources and funding agencies. Better education, through training or collaboration, of the top five grant search engines could prove beneficial to reducing this concern and translate into more grant applications being awarded.

As a method of combating the problem of missed opportunities and tedious search requirements, several managers suggested the need for an outside agency to continuously monitor both the minutes of commission meetings and long term capital improvement projects. The scanning process of the minutes would look for key words that would alert staff to grant opportunities that may otherwise be missed. For example, if the minutes documented a remark by a concerned police chief about obsolete equipment, such a remark could be picked up by a scan and a search initiated for grant funding opportunities for the obsolete equipment. Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) are generally updated every five years. On each annual update, the document could be compared with the previous plan; the changes noted, and a search could be made for all new entries. This could work especially well considering the long term nature of the CIP, giving staff adequate lead time for the grant application process.

Cities that have experienced limited success in grant application may become discouraged to the point of only applying for grants for projects that have the highest priority within their city and also only those grants that funding is somewhat assured, a technique known as "picking the easy fruit."

Competition among cities is a concern because of limited dollars from traditional government funding sources. Non-traditional funding sources, such as non-profits, foundation, and for-profit corporations generally have the same amount of money available each year for grants. Many non-profits and foundations are required by law to give away a certain percentage of their assets each year. For-profit corporations may experience less profit, and therefore less monies available for grants, but generally the amount available does not change significantly, if at all. For example, in Lake Wales, Wal-Mart has made grant money available for years in nearly identical amounts from year to year. The concern of competition among cities can be lessened by cities becoming more aware of all funding sources, learning from previous grant applications and denials, and improving their techniques in the grant application process.

Lack of clear direction by a city's commission or council on grants can be corrected simply by asking for a policy position on grants. There appears to be general lack of information on grant fundamentals by municipal governing bodies. While there is an occasional concern about accepting grant money from a corporation or organization involved in quality of life products, such as tobacco, the more prevailing issues seem to be a lack of understanding of how effective strategies may benefit a city. This can especially become a problem in long term planning. The makeup of an elected body and their philosophy on grants can change with each election, but certain strategies can be most beneficial when considered and acted upon with the long term in mind. In such a case, it may be more beneficial to enact an ordinance that confirms a policy. An ordinance is generally a stronger statement than a policy and for a longer term. A lack of clear direction from council or commission can lead to a confused staff causing missed grant funding opportunities.

An area that will require the assistance of county or state elected officials to correct is that of improved relationships with county and state officials. County and state elected officials generally do not know of the problems and concerns of small cities because the cities have not made a significant attempt to stay connected and to share these concerns. All too often, staff members go to legislative committee meetings instead of local elected officials because these meetings are held during the day and most elected city officials are at a job other than their responsibilities as a commissioner or councilman. All commissioners and councilman included in the cities of this study are considered part-time and receive commensurate compensation. The salary of the mayor/commissioner of Lake Wales is $358 a month. County and state officials need to make an effort to visit the elected officials of their districts to gain a better understanding of the concerns regarding grant awareness and application. The local elected officials generally do not have the means or the time to travel to Bartow (the county seat of Polk County) or Tallahassee. Another area of needed assistance is from organizations like the Florida League of Cities. While the League has excellent programs on a variety of topics at their quarterly and annual conventions, grant writing is not aggressively promoted.

<u>Recommendations</u>

This study was designed to evaluate the grant writing policies and practices of small cities in Polk County. The responses to the survey seem to indicate there is room for considerable improvement in the grant writing strategies of those cities included in the study.

At the apex of all the areas that could be improved, training should receive the greatest attention. The training should include staff and elected officials and cover such areas as benefits of grants, reasons for grant denial, and greater understanding of matching funds and their

requirements. An effort should be undertaken to search for a successful model of collaborative effort among cities in other parts of the country and a commitment should be made to implement a collaborative model, including peer reviews, with modifications as necessary. The collaborative effort could include the establishment of a blog on a social media, such as Facebook, to discuss grant strategies among cities.

The city commission or council should be encouraged to become familiar with all types of grants and the grant development phases, and develop a grant writing policy for their city that is consistent with the city's long term goals.

All grant work should be brought and remain in-house wherever possible. Some cities view CDBG grants as too tedious and time consuming to have staff prepare the grant application and perform grant administration. Several outside agencies specialize in writing and administering only CDBG grants and are paid a percentage of the money received. An ideal staffing strategy in difficult economic times is for a city to have two part-time grant writers; one to write grants and one to administer grants. As more grants become funded or the economy improves, the part-time staff could become full time.

Staff should be responsible for finding funding sources and not delegate such an important task to an outside agency or service. Staff should develop a procedure to scan all commission minutes after each meeting for grant possibilities. Also, the CIP should be reviewed annually for possible grant projects.

Finally, staff should develop a more aggressive approach in searching for funding agencies. In addition to the traditional sources, such as government agencies, efforts should be made to connect and network with non-traditional partners such as non-profits, foundations, and

for-profit corporations. According to Cameron, the top search engines for grants are www.grants.gov for Federal grants; www.foundationcenter.org for foundations and corporate grants, www.floridagrantwatch.com for Florida focused grants, and www.GrantStation.com for a mixture of grant opportunities.

Implications

The current grant writing policies and practices, as found by the survey included in this study, suggest changes are necessary for municipalities to maximize their grant writing capabilities and efforts. If cities do not make changes to their present methodologies to grant writing, they will continue to have the same results. The incentive to make the suggested changes is now because the economic slowdown has caused cities to look at new and different funding sources, and rethink relationships with old sources.

The implementation of the recommendations of this study will require the full commitment of staff and elected officials. The education of commission, council members, and staff of new grant programs, and terminology, needed to maximize a cities grant program could meet with resistance from old school type of thinking. Old policies will need to be reviewed and reevaluated and new policies may need to be established.

Areas for Possible Future Research

The area of grant denial may be a topic for further research. A study into the reasons of denial may apprise staff so that future mistakes, in whatever form they appear, can be corrected in future grant applications. Mistakes that are not identified and corrected may tend to be repeated with the same negative results. Reasons for grant denial could be included in a strategy of collaborative effort among cities.

Another topic for future study could be a follow-up survey one year after the implementation of the recommendations of this study to evaluate the success of the recommendations. An additional area of further study and research could be to develop a program for better awareness and education of matching requirements and types of matching available.

A final area of further research concerns the topic of lack of funding. It was not clear from the responses if lack of funding was at the city level or the funding source level. Further clarification is required. A lack of funding at the city level could be caused by budget constraints, project priorities, or inadequate long-range planning. Lack of funding at the funding source level could be caused by budget cuts from a weak economy or lack of awareness by the city of all available funding sources.

Final Thoughts

My thesis has gathered information, using a survey, about the grant writing policies and practices of smaller cities in Polk County. As a result of an analysis of the data, it appears many, but not all, of the cities responding to the survey could benefit from improvements to their grant writing strategies. The grant writing methodologies used by many cities have been in place for years with little or no change. With the changing of staff and elected officials over time, methods of grant strategies have been slow to react to the changing nature of grants and their potential financial impact on a community.

Staff training in grant writing is conveniently available, either on-line or in-class, at affordable tuition costs. Cities should be willing to pay for staff education and training if they are serious about pursuing grant opportunities.

Search engines specializing in municipal grants are available at reasonable or no costs. Cities have voiced a need to network together in a collaborative effort to help each other learn the art and craft of writing successful grants and finding funding sources which would enhance the grant funding success for all participants.

Elected officials, at all levels, need to be better educated on the benefits of grants and work to develop positive and practical grant writing policies. Finally, county and state legislative bodies need to reach out to local elected officials, and city staff, to provide greater assistance in developing grant writing strategies and to bring greater awareness of grant funding opportunities. Albert Einstein once said, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." The task has been identified, but the work has just begun.

APPENDIX A: GRANT WRITING POLICIES AND PRACTICES SURVEY

1. Please identify your city.

    o   Auburndale

    o   Bartow

    o   Davenport

    o   Dundee

    o   Eagle Lake

    o   Fort Meade

    o   Frostproof

    o   Haines City

    o   Highland Park

    o   Hillcrest Heights

    o   Lake Alfred

    o   Lake Wales

    o   Mulberry

2. What is today's date?

    _____

3. What is your name? This question is optional.

    _____

4. What is your position with the city?

    _____

5. How many years have you been in this position?

    _____

6. What is your age? This question is optional.

   o Under 30

   o 30-39

   o 40-49

   o 50 and over

7. What is your gender? This question is optional.

   o Male

   o Female

8. What is your ethnicity? This question is optional.

   o Hispanic or Latino

   o Not Hispanic or Latino

9. What is your race? This question is optional.

   o American Indian or Alaska native

   o Asian

   o Black or African American

   o Native Hawaiian or Other pacific Islander

   o White

10. What is your highest education level? This question is optional.

   o Did not complete highs school

   o High school graduate (including GED)

   o Two years of collage or less

   o More than two years of college

- College graduate (four year)

- Some graduate courses

- Masters Degree

- Doctorate Degree

11. Do you personally believe grants are beneficial to your city?

- Never

- Occasionally

- Frequently

- Always

Comments

_____

12. If you believe grants are NOT beneficial to your city (Question 11), please explain why not.

_____

13. Does your city routinely search for available grant funding for all projects?

- Always

- Sometimes

- Never

Other (please specify)

_____

14. Does your city apply for county, state, federal grants or all grants (check all that apply).

- County

o State

o Federal

o All

Other (please specify)

_____

15. Does your city seek grants from non-profit organizations (501(c)3)?

o Never

o Sometimes

o Frequently

o Always

If you answered Sometimes, Frequently, or Always, please specify the types of

projects involved.

_____

16. Does your city seek grants from foundations?

o Never

o Sometimes

o Frequently

o Always

If you answered Sometimes, Frequently, or Always, please specify the types of

projects involved.

_____

17. Does your city seek grants from for-profit corporations?

o Never

o Sometimes

o Frequently

o Always

If you answered Sometimes, Frequently, or Always, please specify the types of

projects involved.

_____

18. Does your city partner with corporations, foundations, or non-profits in grant requests?

o Never

o Sometimes

o Frequently

o Always

Other (please specify)

_____

19. Does your city have a dedicated grant writer on staff?

o Yes, full time

o Yes, part time

o No

If No, please explain why not.

_____

20. What type and how much formal training in grant writing does your staff have?

o None

o Limited

o Extensive

Please explain.

_____

21. Does your city contract with an outside grant writing agency or grant consultant?

o Always

o Sometimes

o Never

Other (please specify)

_____

22. Before a grant is submitted to a funding agency, is the application routinely reviewed by

a staff member who is experienced in grant writing other than the author?

o Yes

o No

o Sometimes

Additional comments

_____

23. How many grants has your city applied for and received in the past five years?

o 0

o 1-3

o 4-6

o 7-10

o   11 or more

Other (please specify)

_____

24. Please indicate the total amount of grant funding your city has received within the past

five from all sources.

o   Less than $1 million

o $1 million - $2.9 million

o $3 million - $4.9 million

o $5 million - $9.9 million

o $10 million - $19.9 million

o $20 million - $49.9 million

o   Over $50 million

Comments

_____

25. How many grants has your city applied for and NOT received within the past five years?

o   0

o   1-3

o   4-6

o   7-10

o   11 or more

Other (please specify)

_____

26. Please indicate the total amount of grant funding requested but NOT funded within the past five years from all sources.

- o Less than $1 million

- o $1 million - $2.9 million

- o $3 million - $4.9 million

- o $5 million - $9.9 million

- o $10 million - $19.9 million

- o $20 million - $29.9 million

- o $30 million - $49.9 million

- o Over $50 million

Comments

_____

27. If any grant request was denied funding with the past five years from any source, please indicate the reason for denial. Check all that apply.

- o Missed deadline

- o Incomplete application

- o Inaccurate application

- o Did not follow guidelines

- o Did not follow directions

- o Other

If other, please explain

_____

28. Does your city have grant writing policies established by the council or commission?

o   Yes

o   No

If "Yes", please explain.

_____

29. Does each department, such as Police and Fire, write their own grants?

o   Yes

o   No

o   Sometimes

Other (please specify)

_____

30.   In what areas does your city apply for grants? Check all that apply.

o   Public safety

o   Recreation

o   Infrastructure

o   Economic development

o   Education

o   Housing

o   Other

Other (please specify)

_____

31. Do you have the assistance of an outside company or agency continuously searching for

grant opportunities?

- o   Yes, always

- o   Yes, sometimes

- o   No

Additional comments

_____

32. Have you found grant funding to be beneficial for your city?

- o   Yes

- o   No

- o   Sometimes

Additional comments

_____

33. What challenges or obstacles have you experienced, are experiencing, or anticipate

experiencing in applying for grants?

_____

34. What additional assistance, if any, would you like to receive that would help your city in

obtaining grants?

_____

35. What are the primary problems your city is experiencing in obtaining grants?

_____

36. What solutions can you offer, or would like to see implemented, that would address these problems?

_____

37. Please provide any additional comments, issues, or concerns regarding grant writing for your city that were not covered in the previous questions.

_____

APPENDIX B: RESPONSE DATA
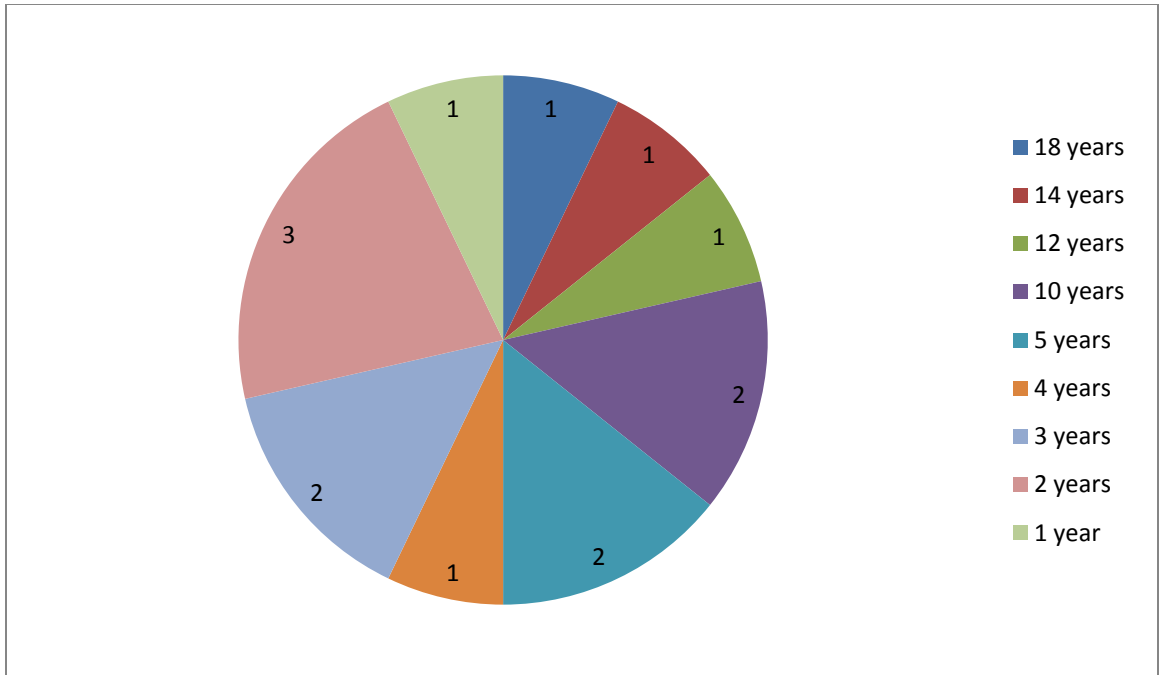
Figure 1: Years in Position
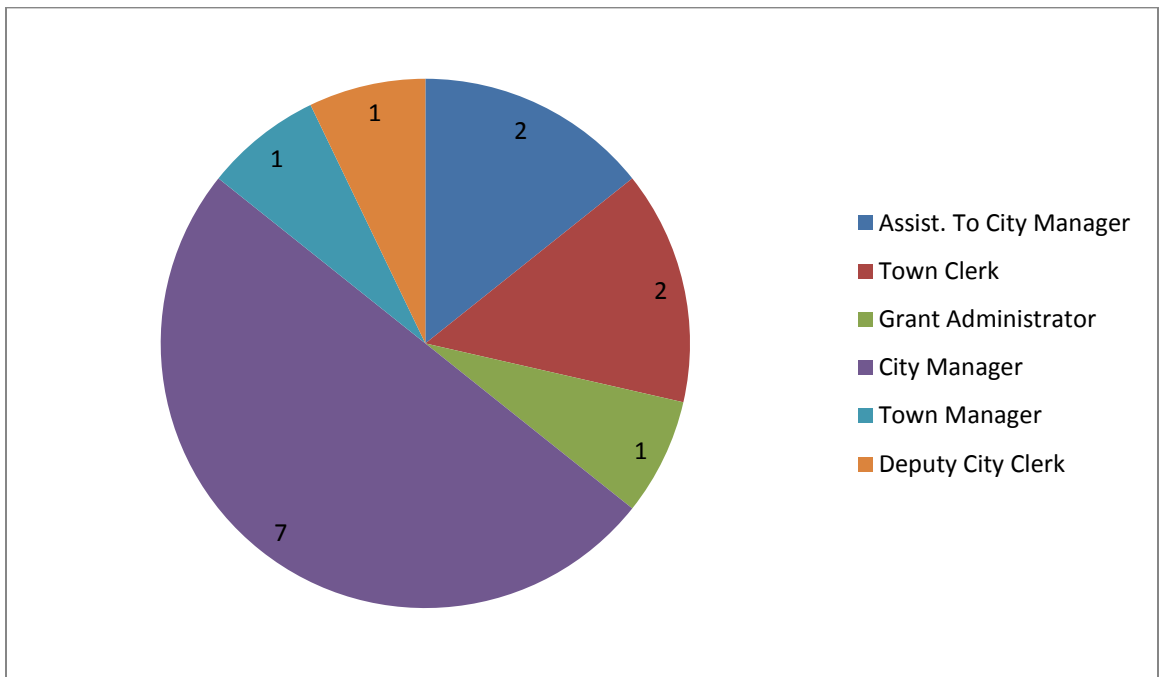
Figure 2: Respondents Position with the City
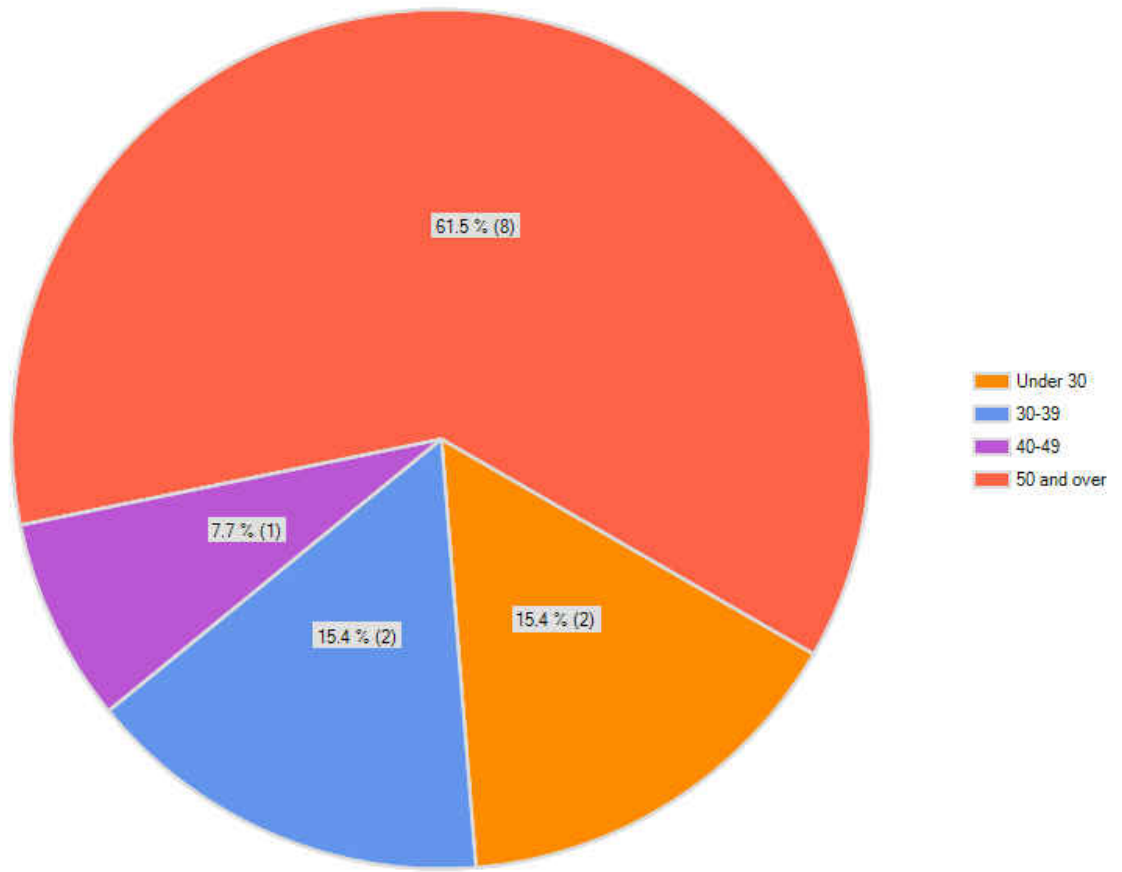
Figure 3: Age Range of Respondents

Figure 4: Gender of Respondents

100.0 % (13)

Hispanic or Latino
Not Hispanic or Latino
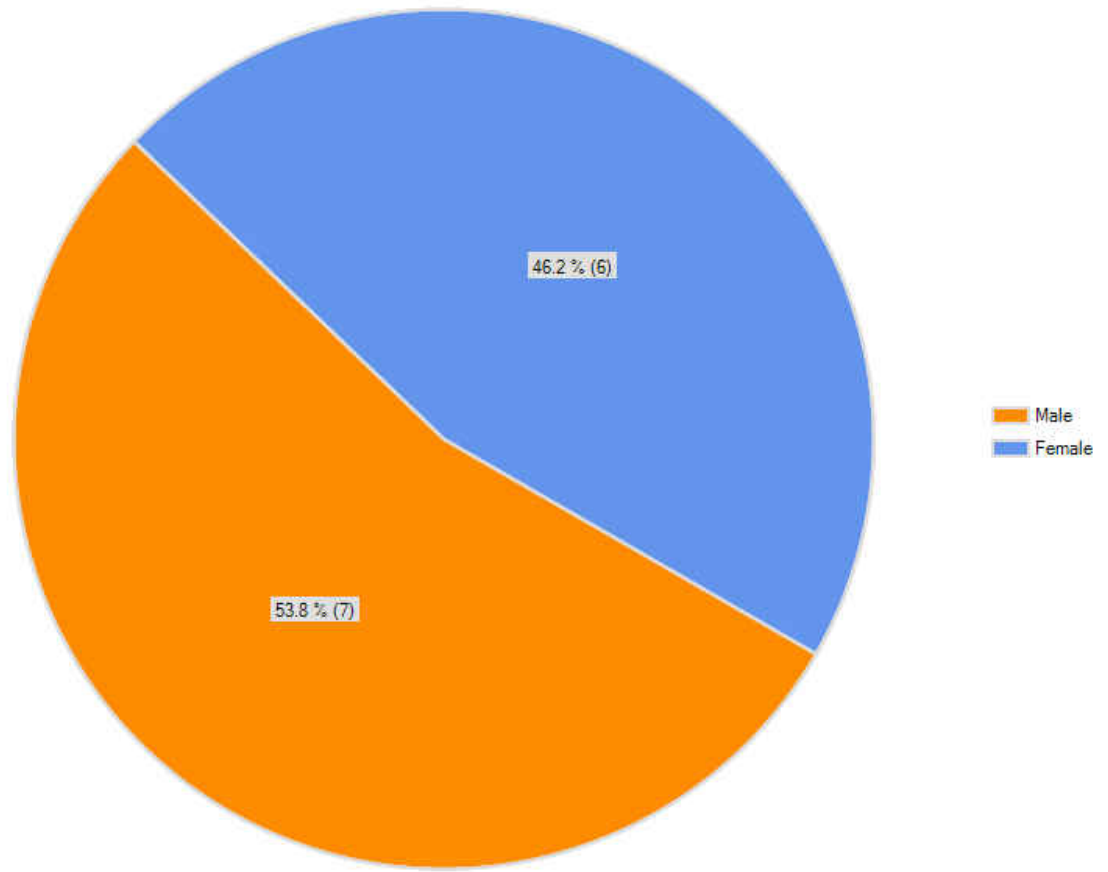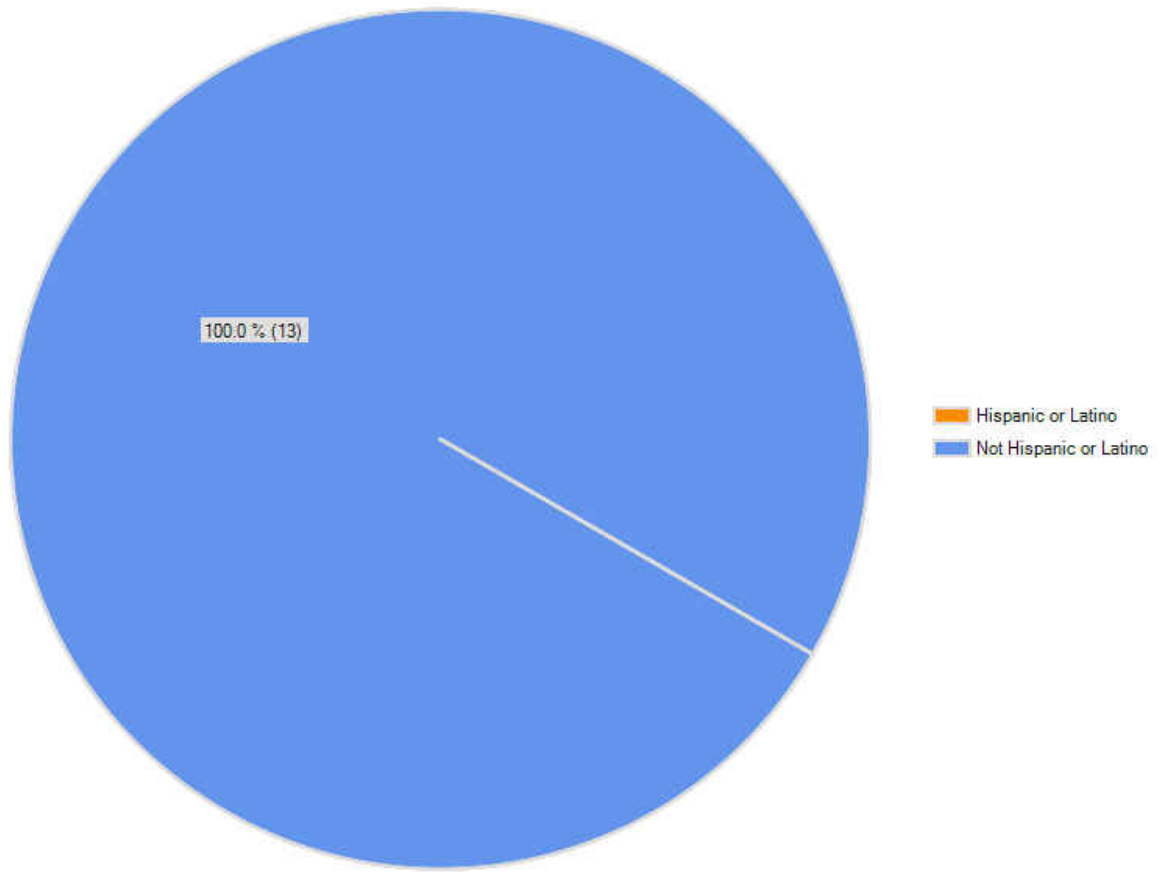
Figure 5: Ethnicity of Respondents
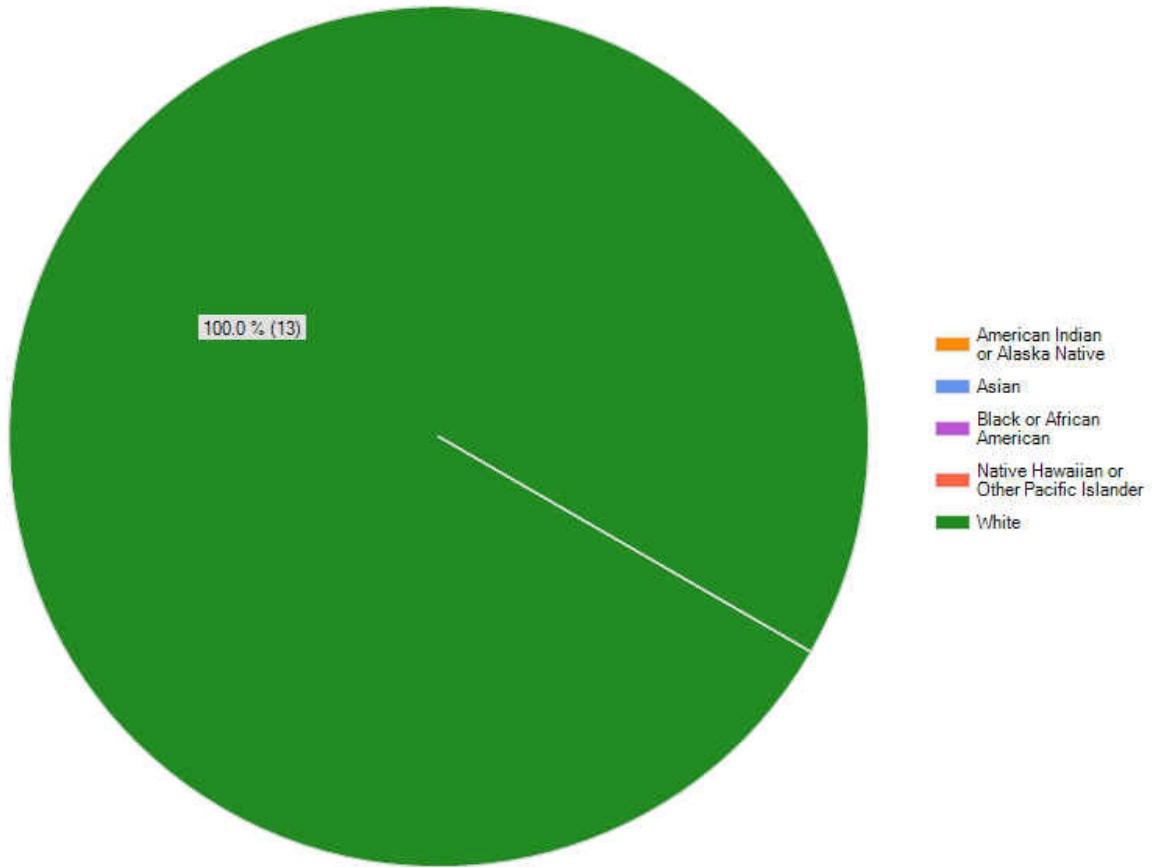
Figure 6: Race of Respondents
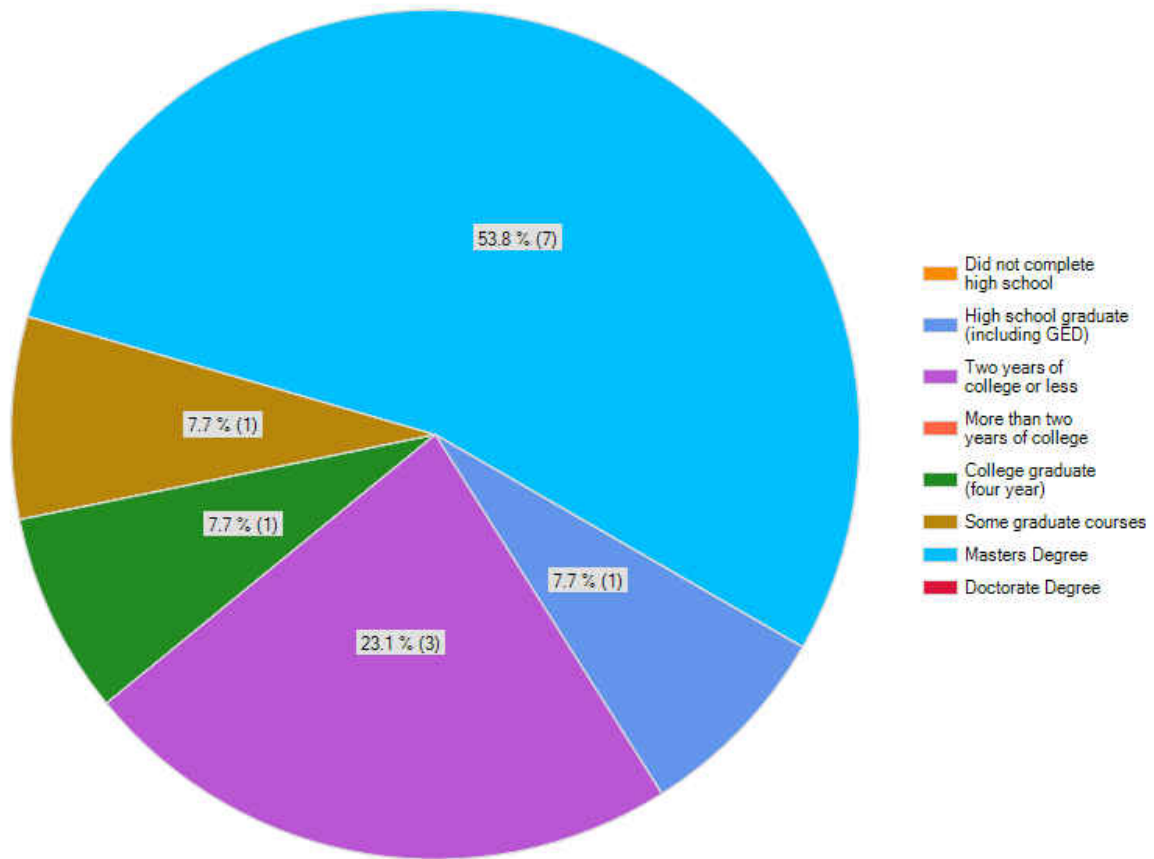
Figure 7: Education Level of Respondents
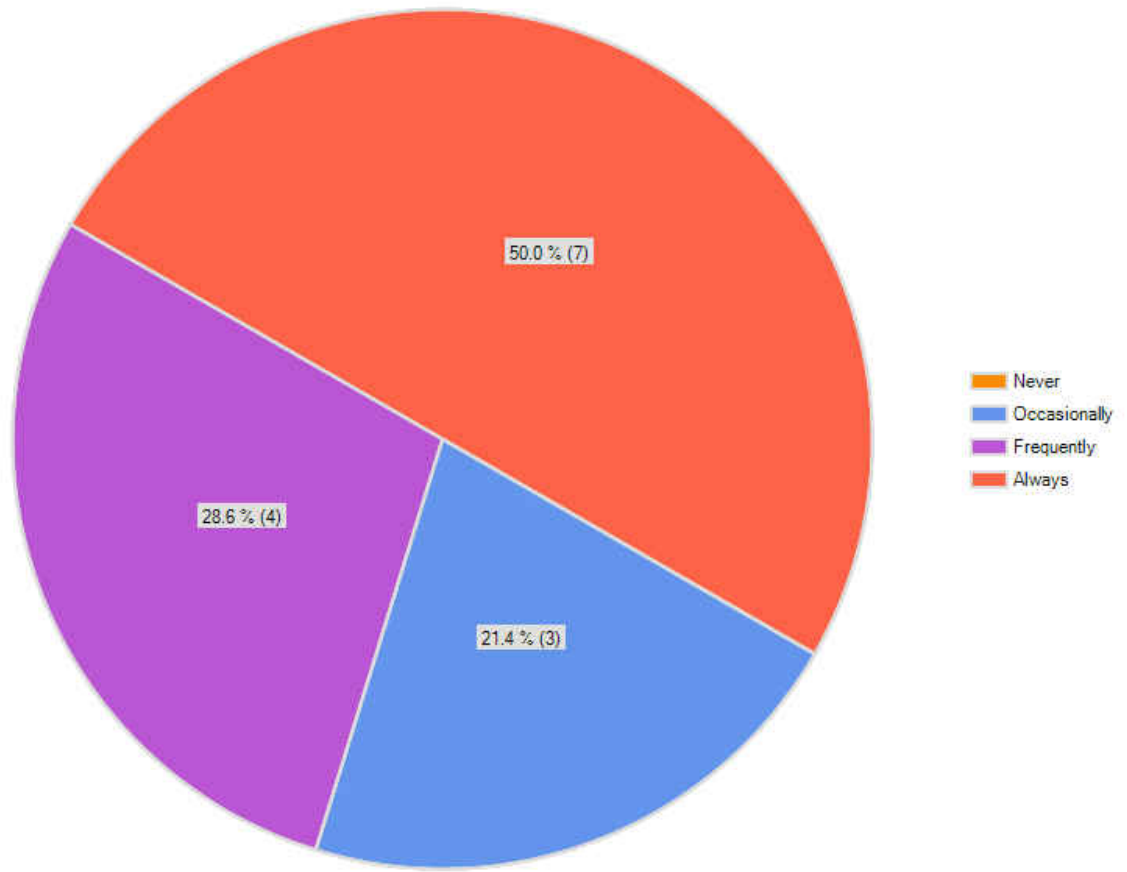
Figure 8: Percentage of Cities Believing Grants Are Beneficial
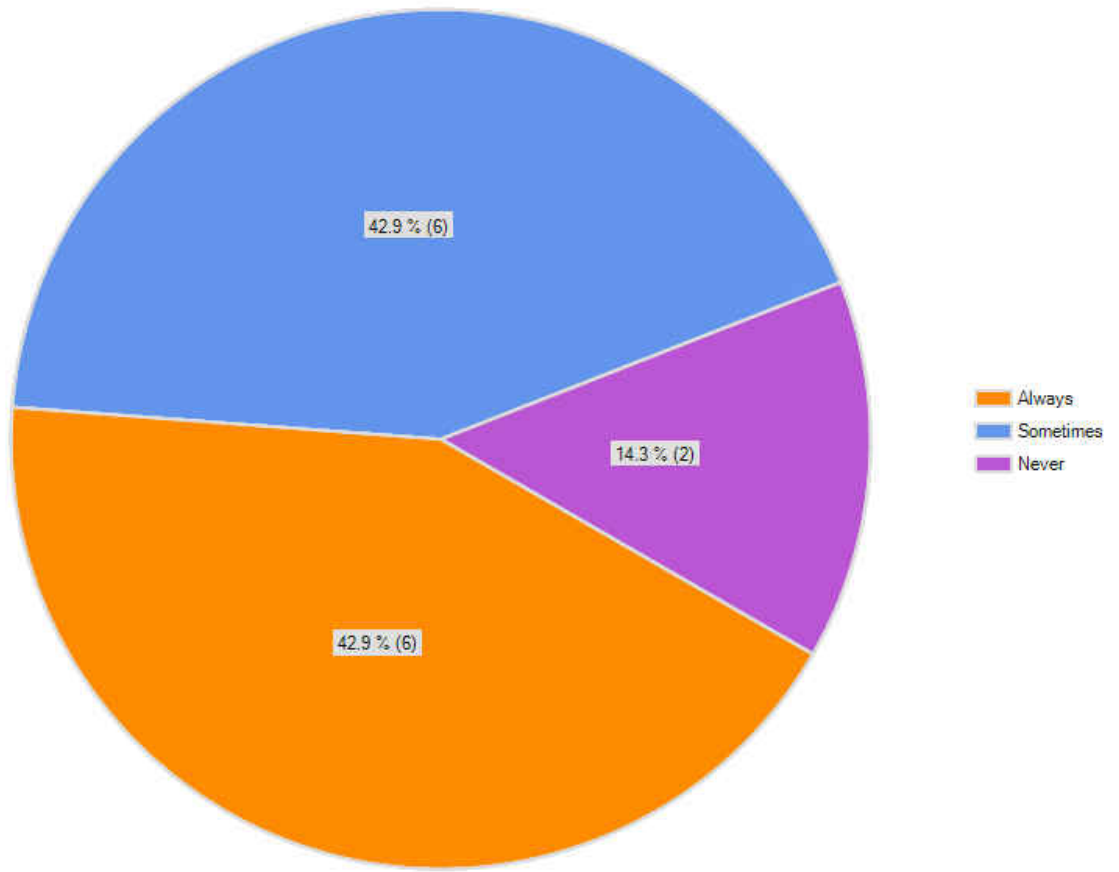
Figure 9: Percentage of Cities That Routinely Search For Grants For All Projects
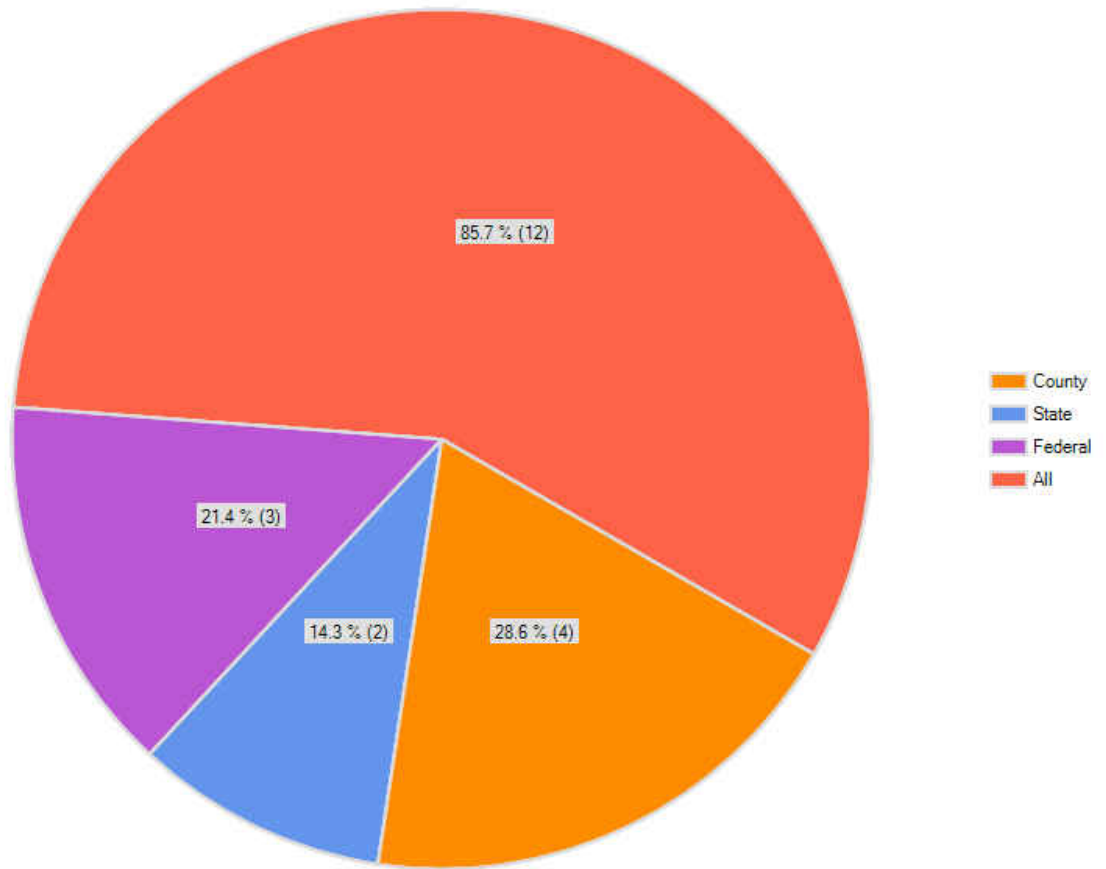
Figure 10: Grant Applications by Type of Government Source
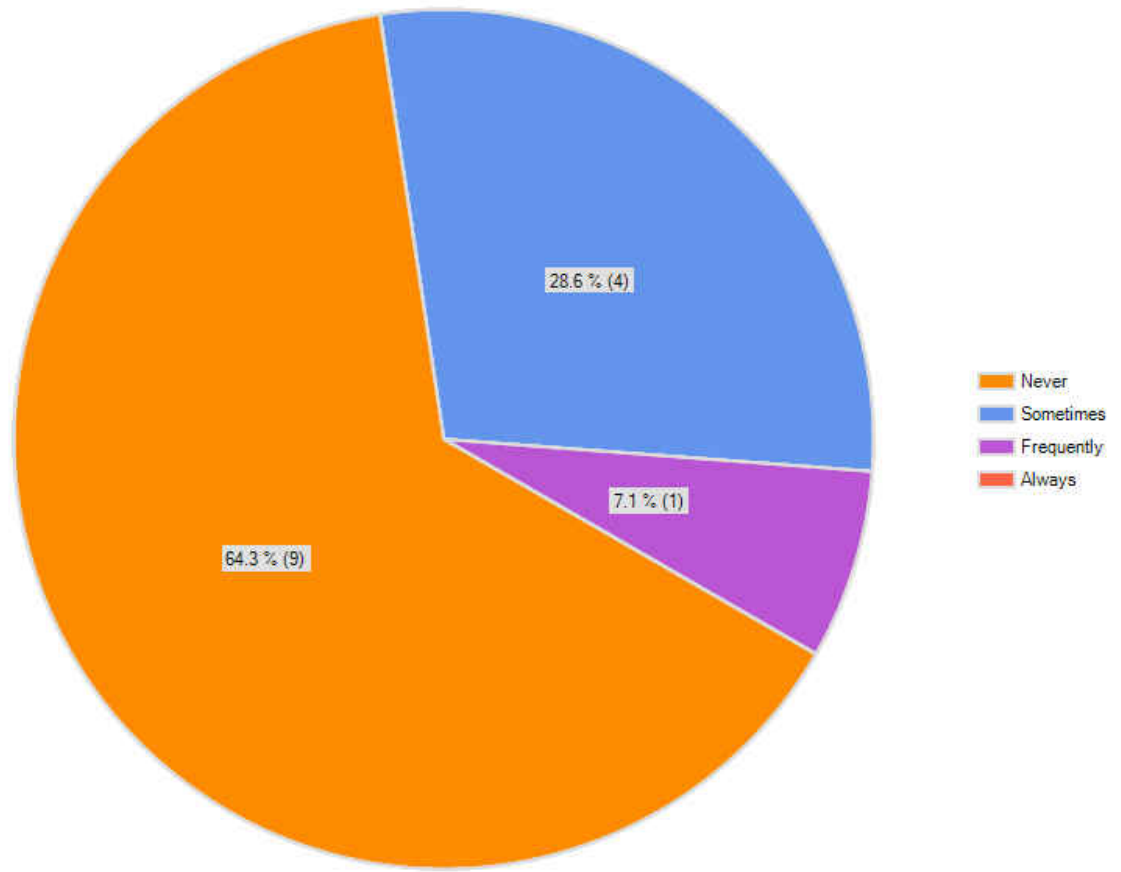
Figure 11: Percentage of Cities Seeking Grants from Non-Profits
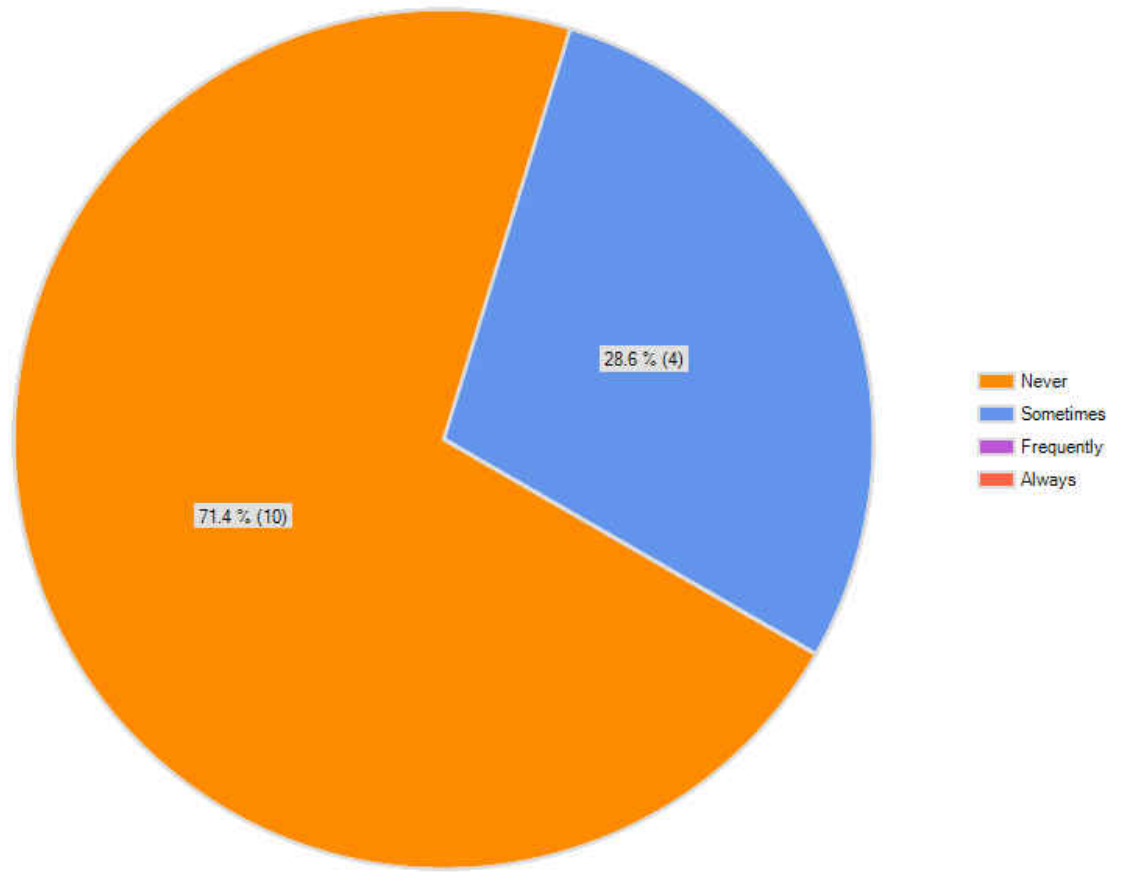
Figure 12: Percentage of Cities Seeking Grants from Foundations
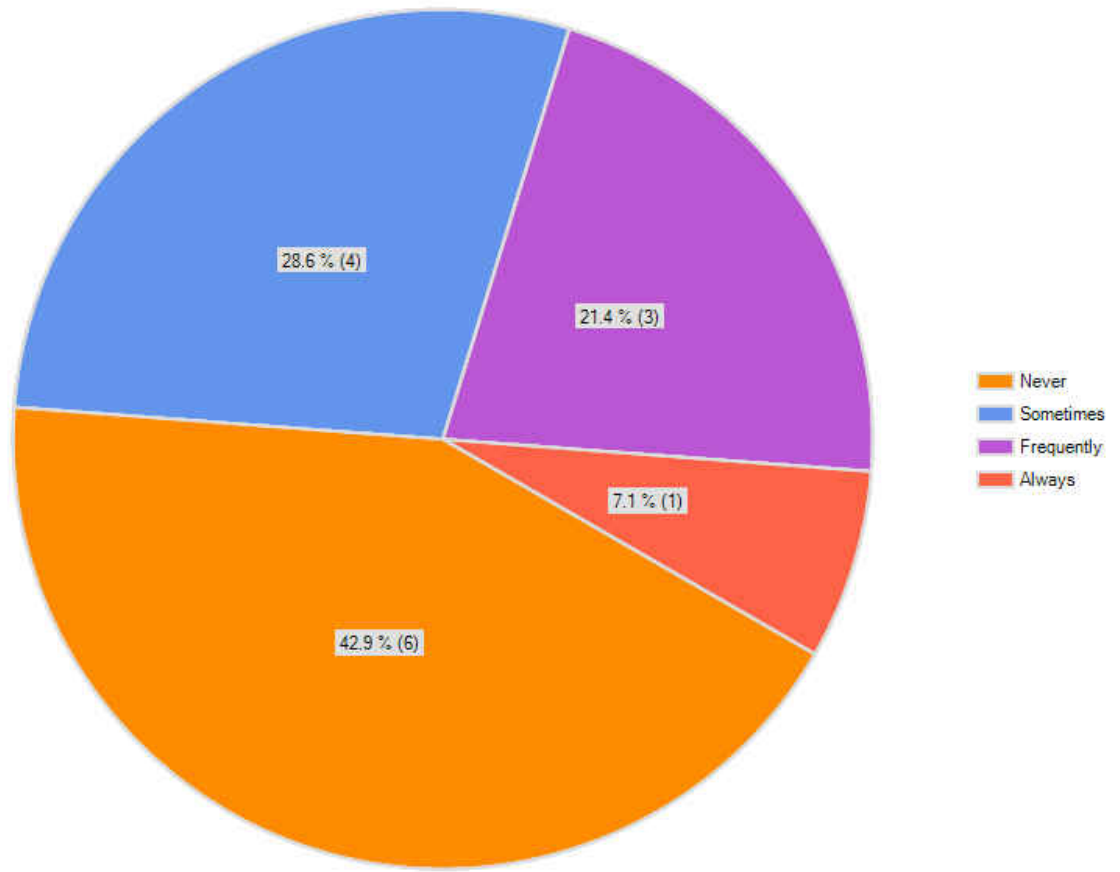
Figure 13: Percentage of Cities Seeking Grants from For-Profit Corporations
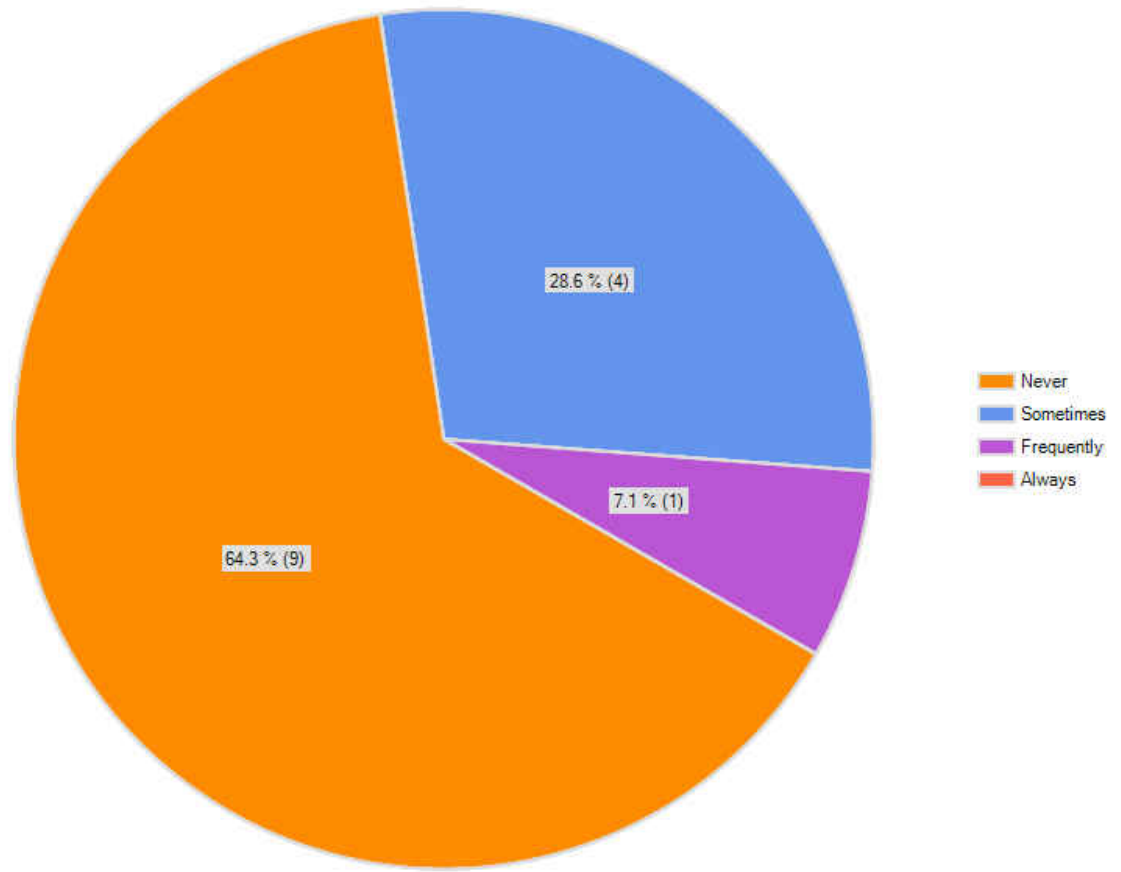
Figure 14: Percentage of Cities Seeking Grant Partners
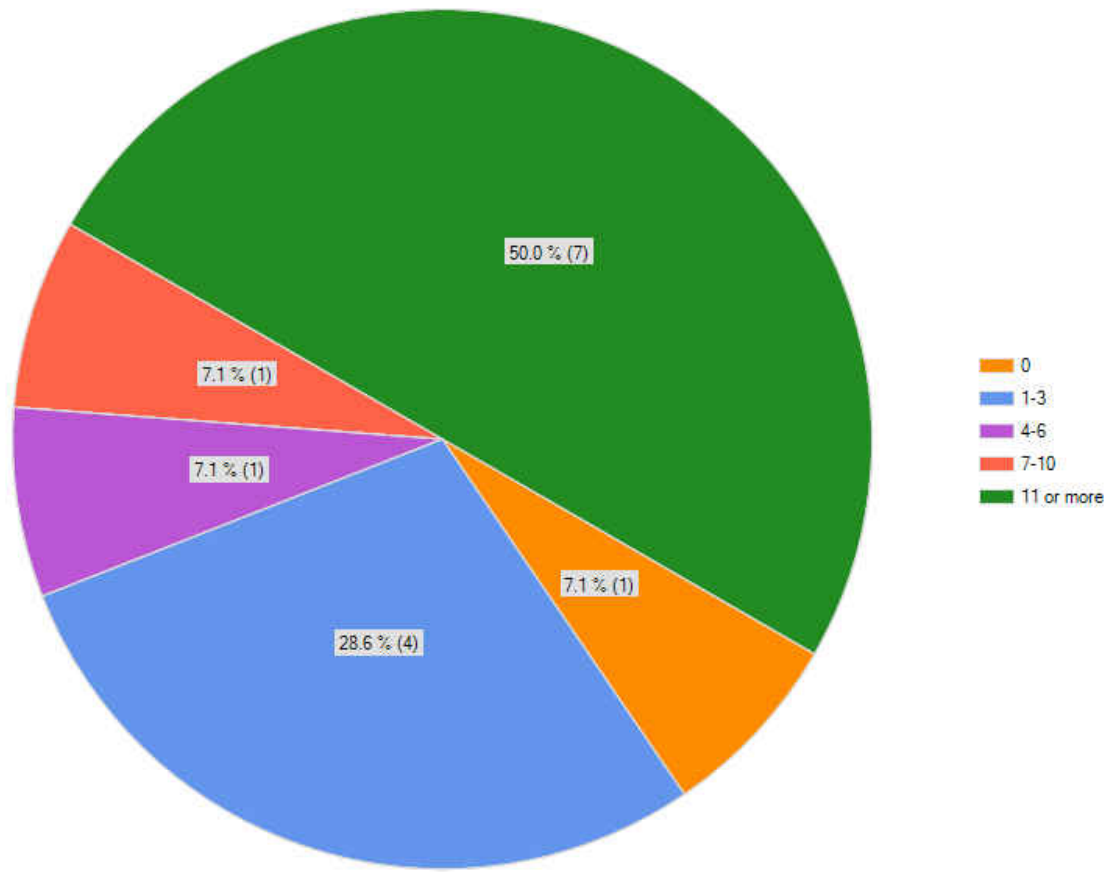
Figure 15: Number of Grants for Which Cities Applied
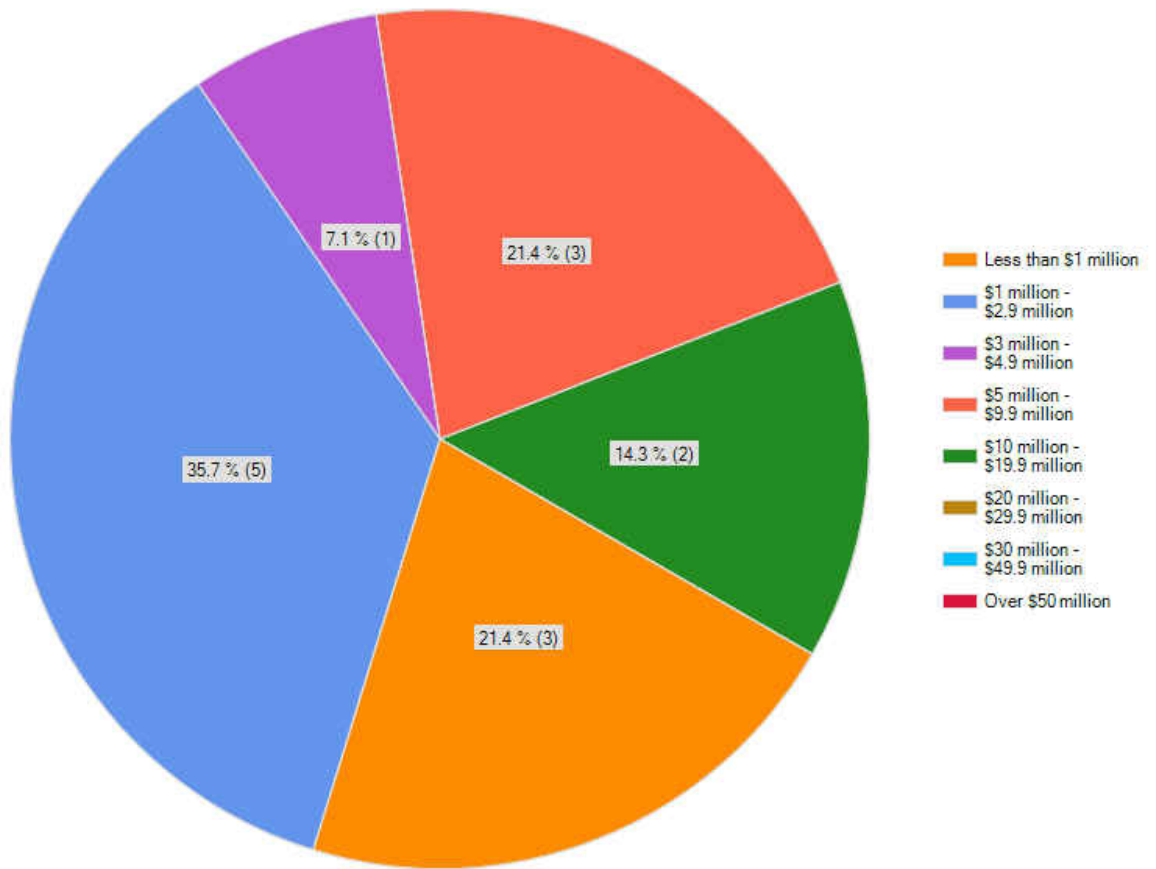
Figure 16: Amount of Grant Money Received
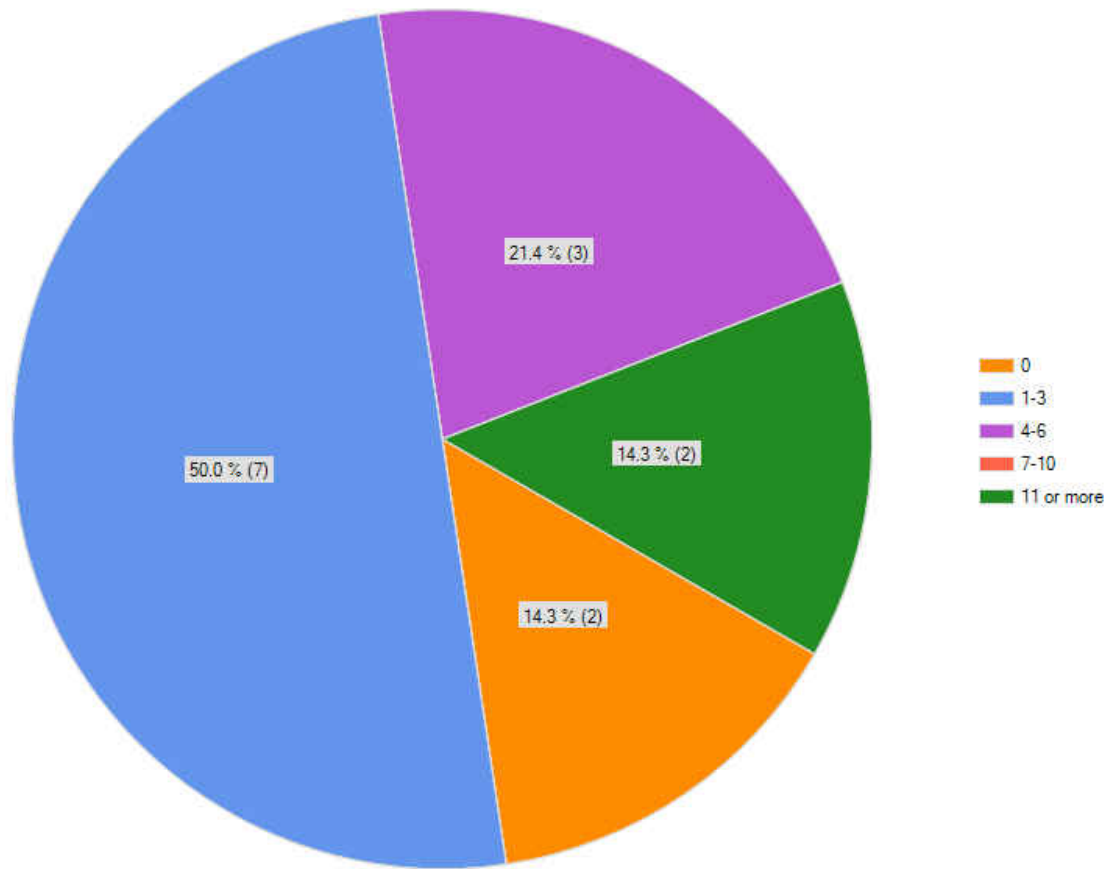
Figure 17: Number of Grants for Which Cities Applied and Did NOT Receive
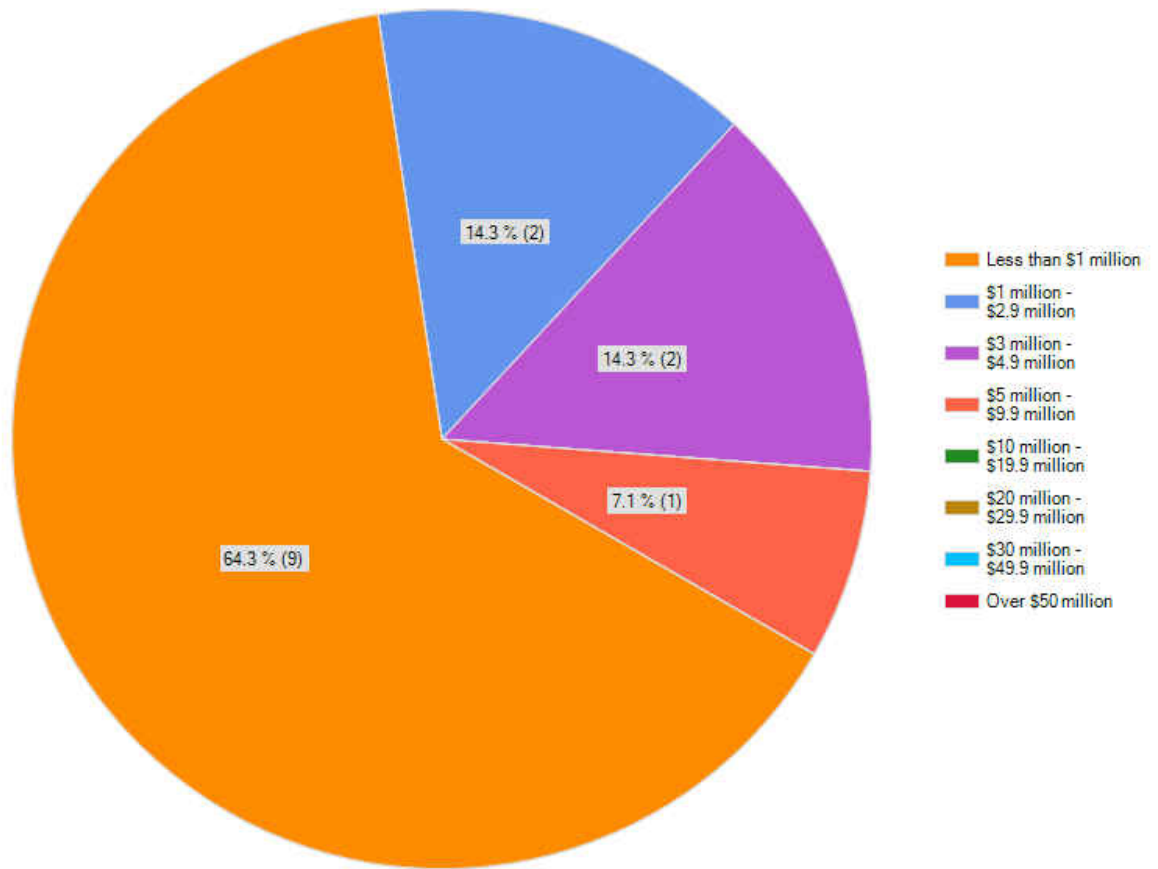
Figure 18: Amount of Grant Money NOT Received
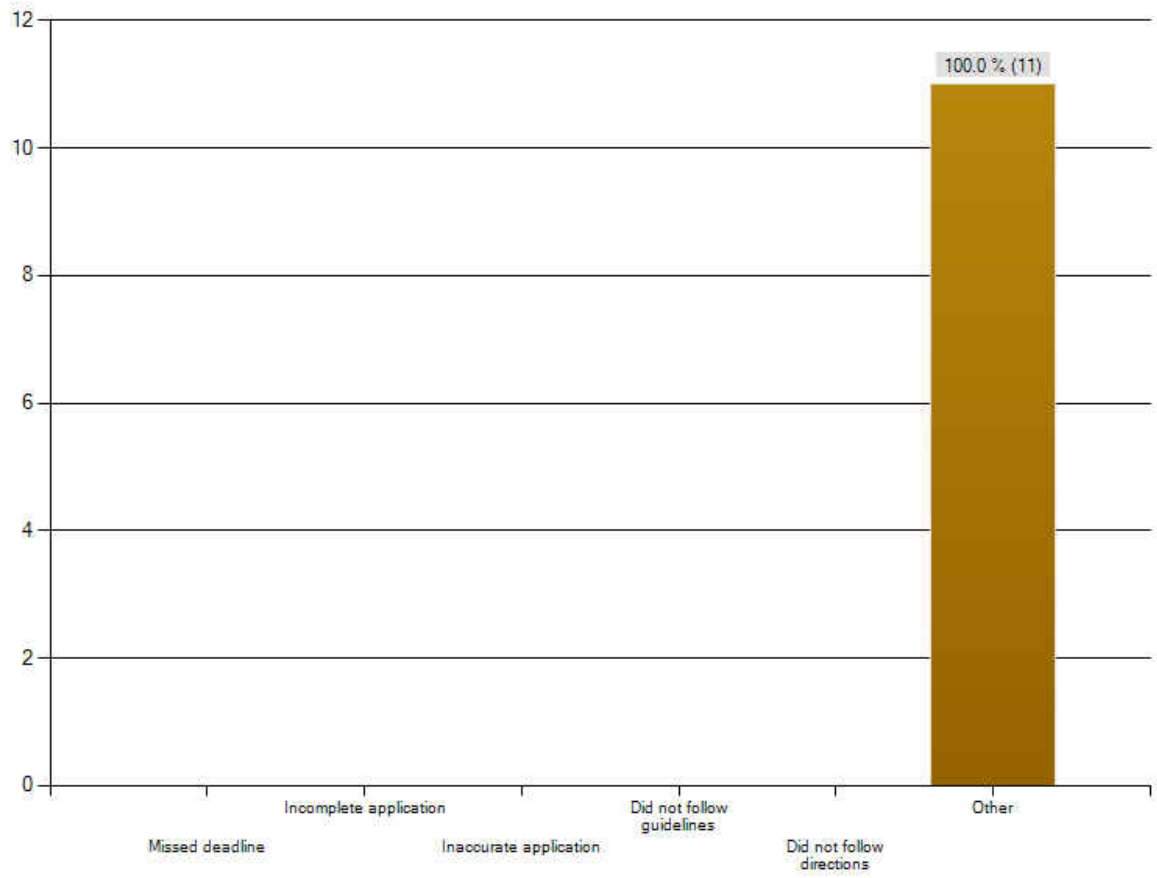
Figure 19: Reasons for Grant Denial
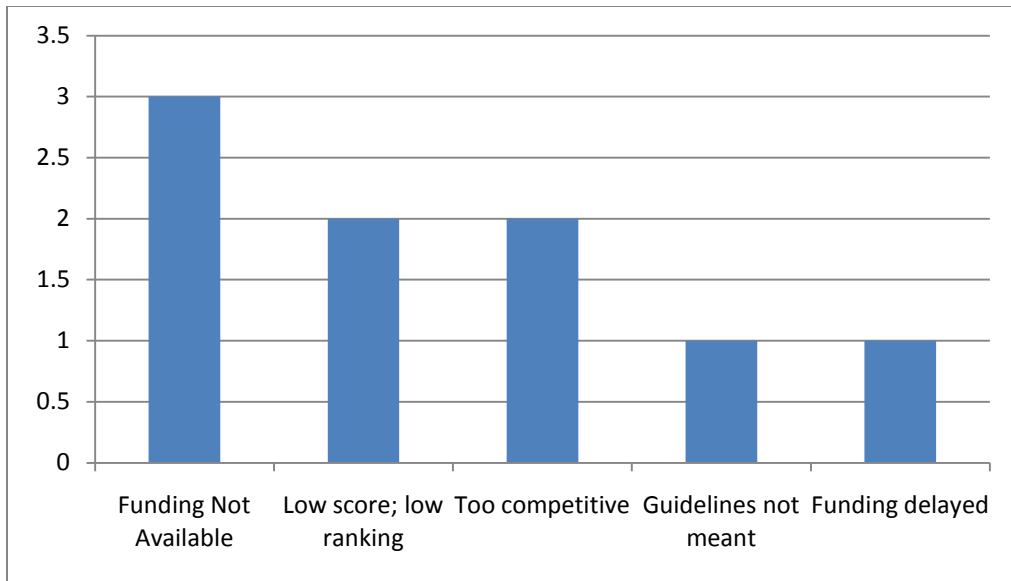
Figure 20: Other Reasons for Grant Denial
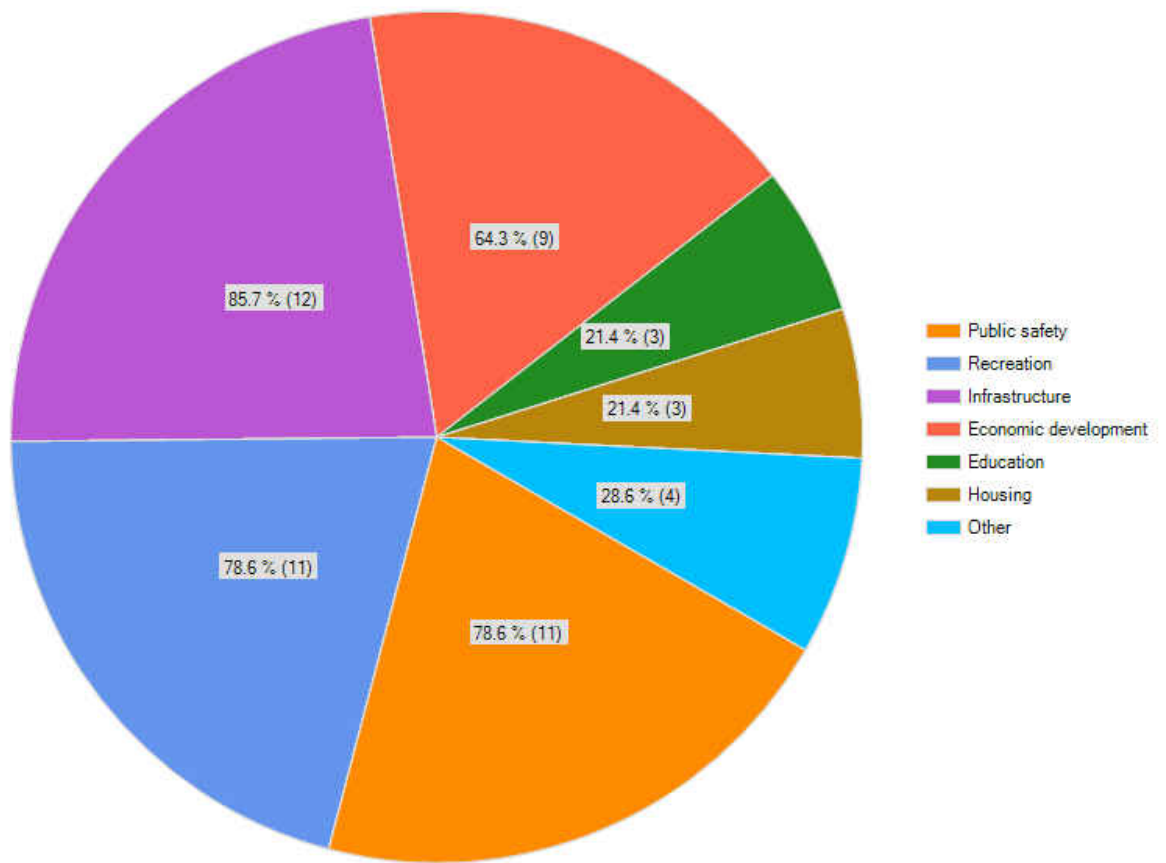
Figure 21: Areas of Grant Application
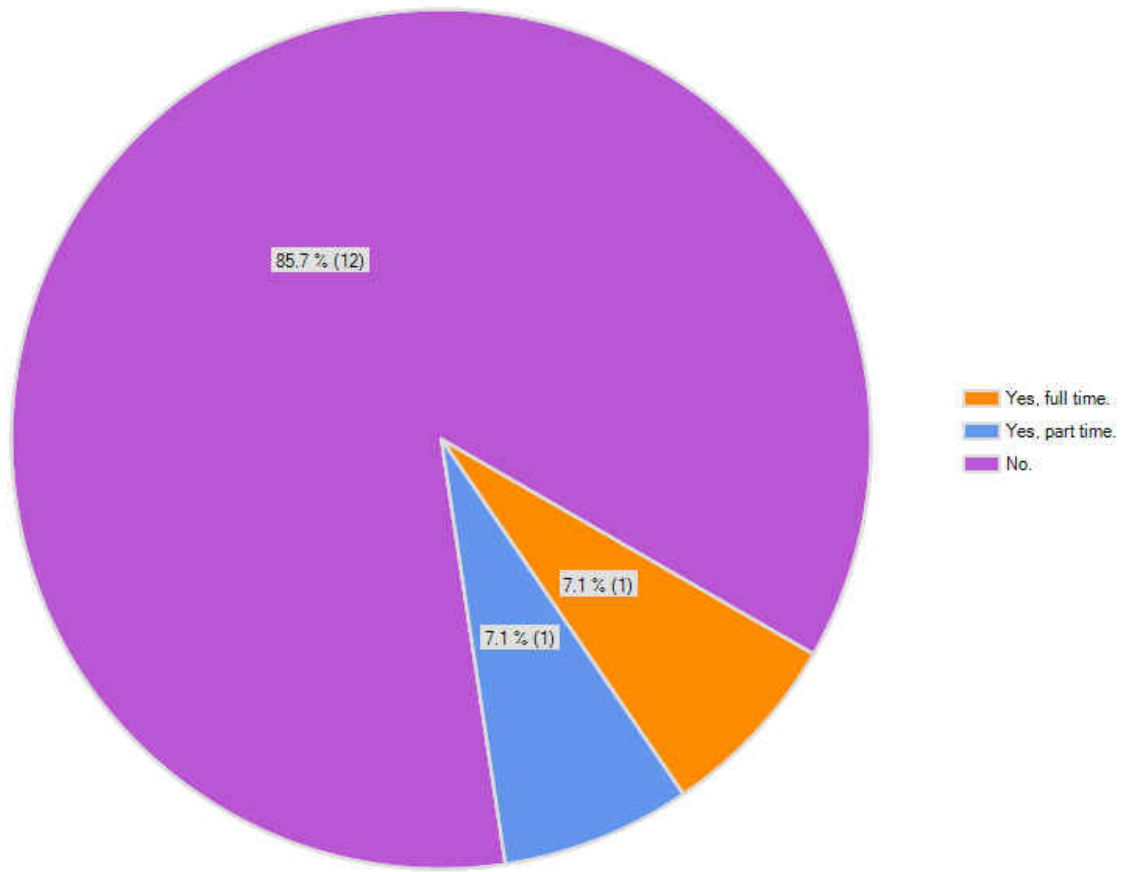
Figure 22: Percentage of Grant Writers on Staff
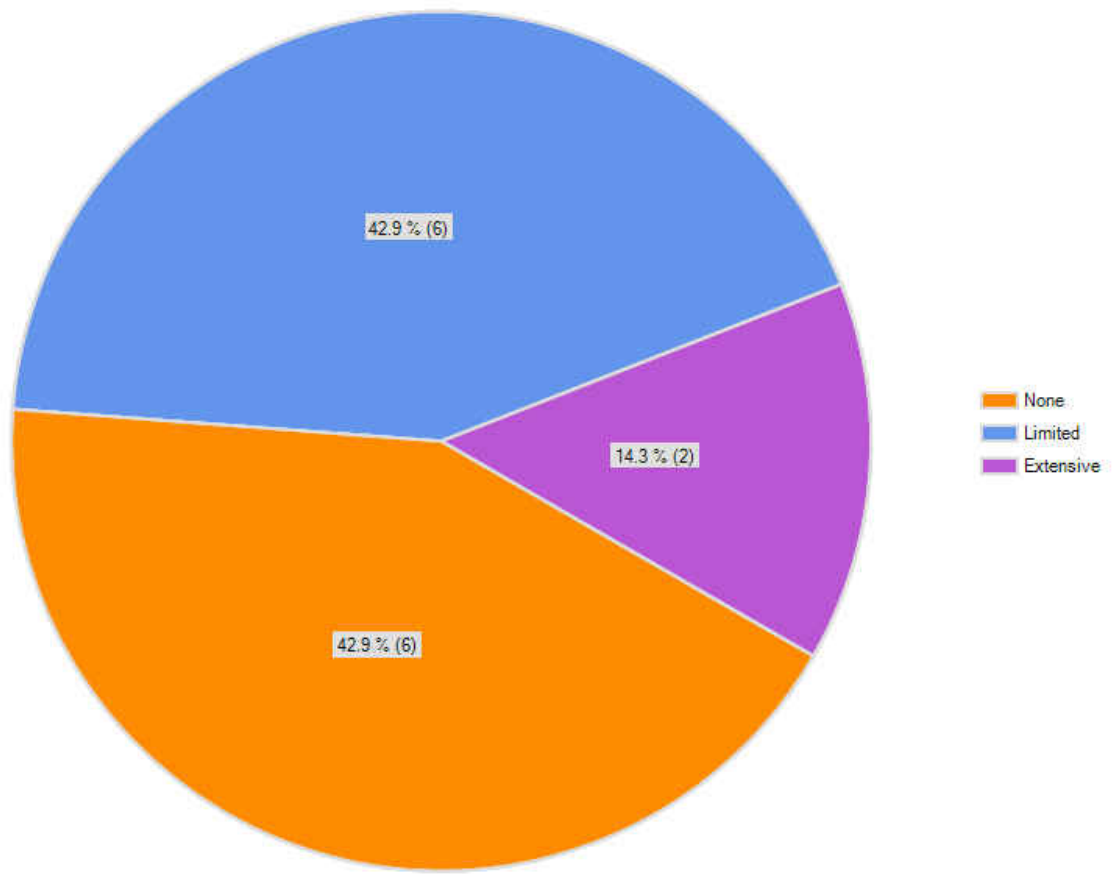
Figure 23: Grant Training of Staff
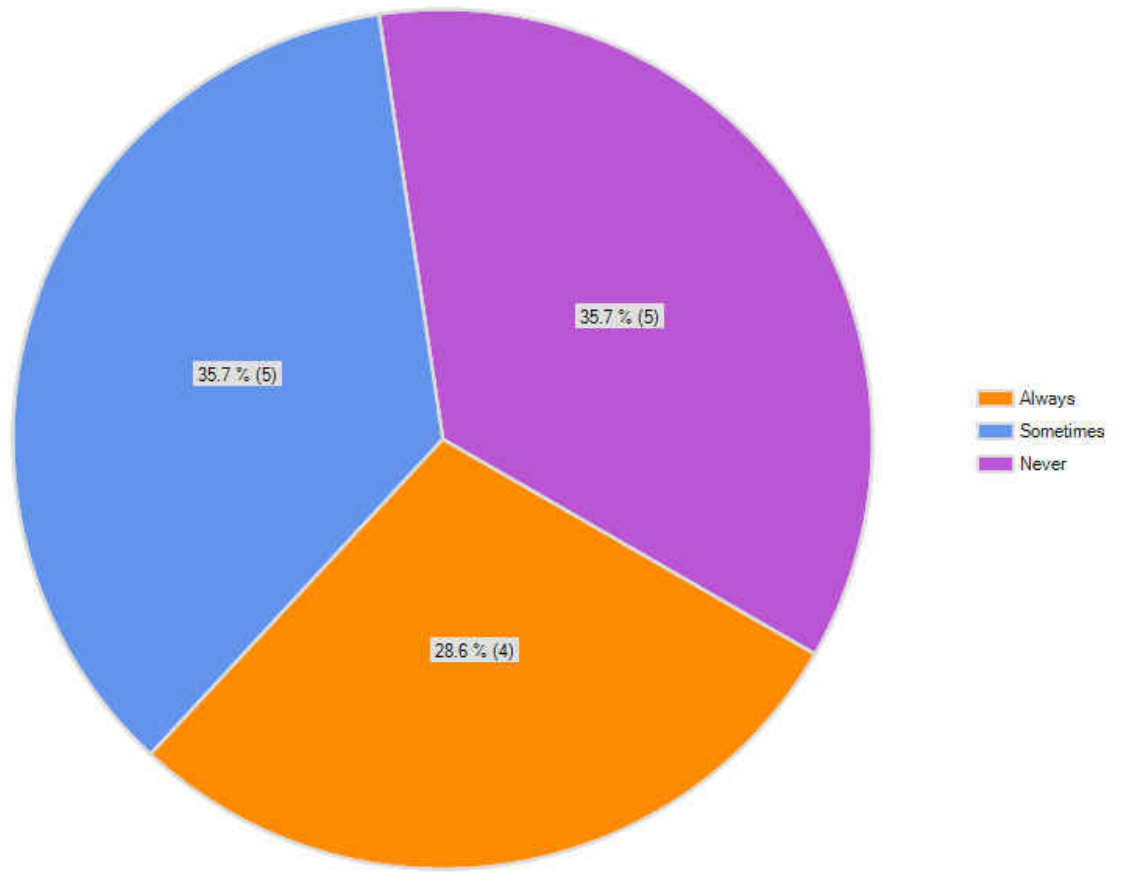
Figure 24: Percentage Cities Contract With Outside Agencies
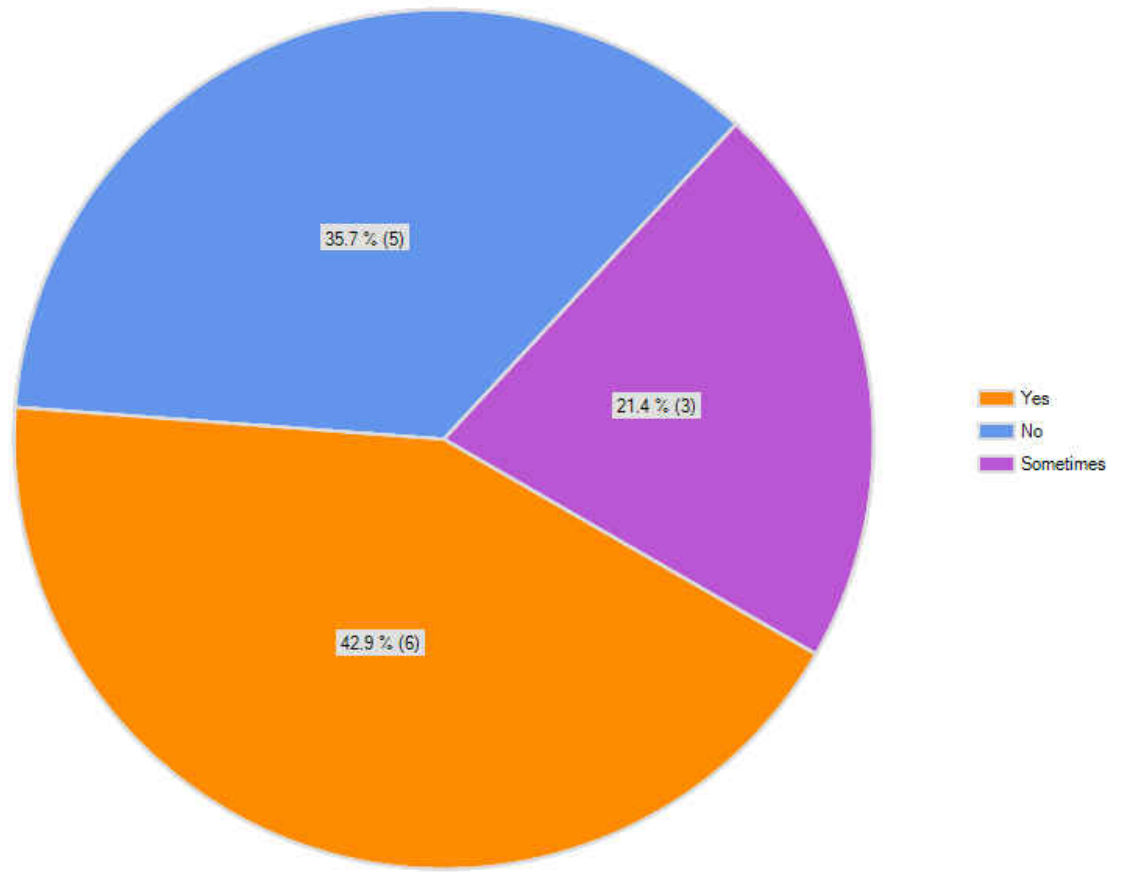
Figure 25: Percentage of Time Grants Are Reviewed by Staff before Being Submitted
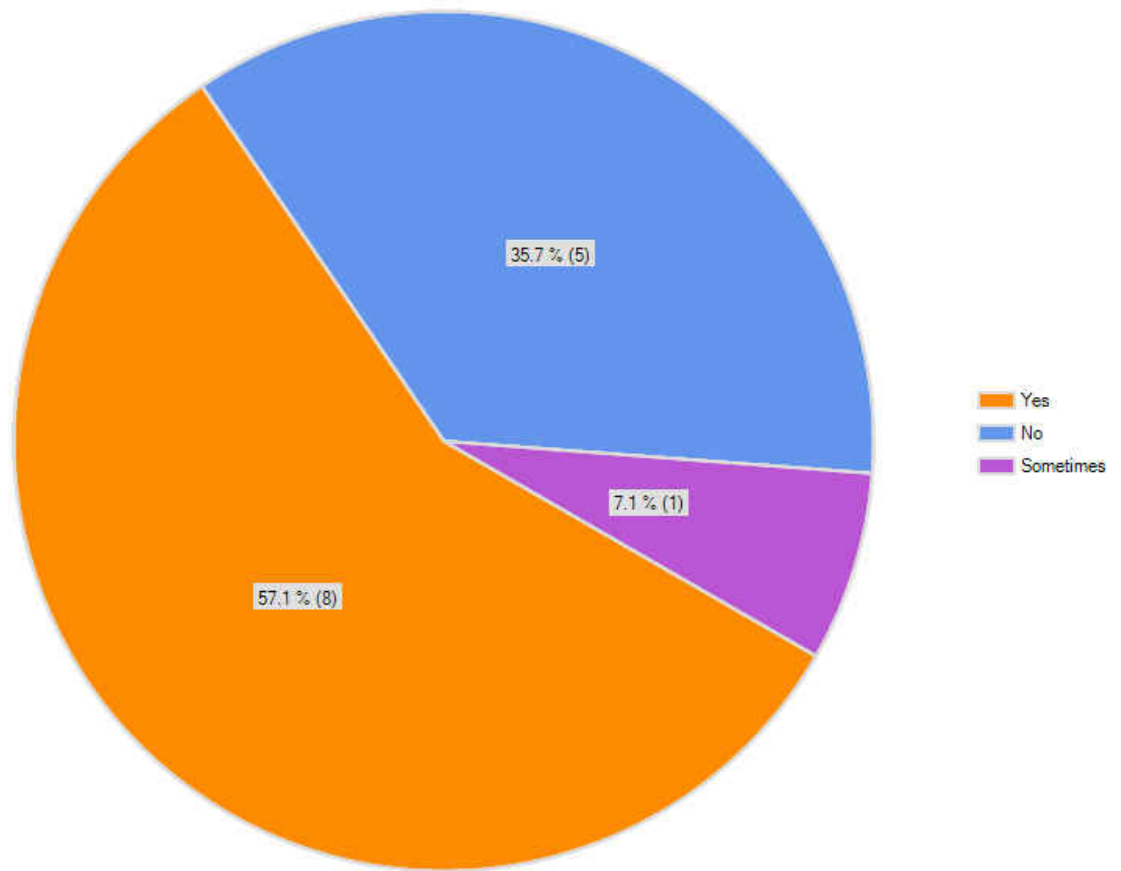
Figure 26: Percentage of Departments That Write Their Own Grants
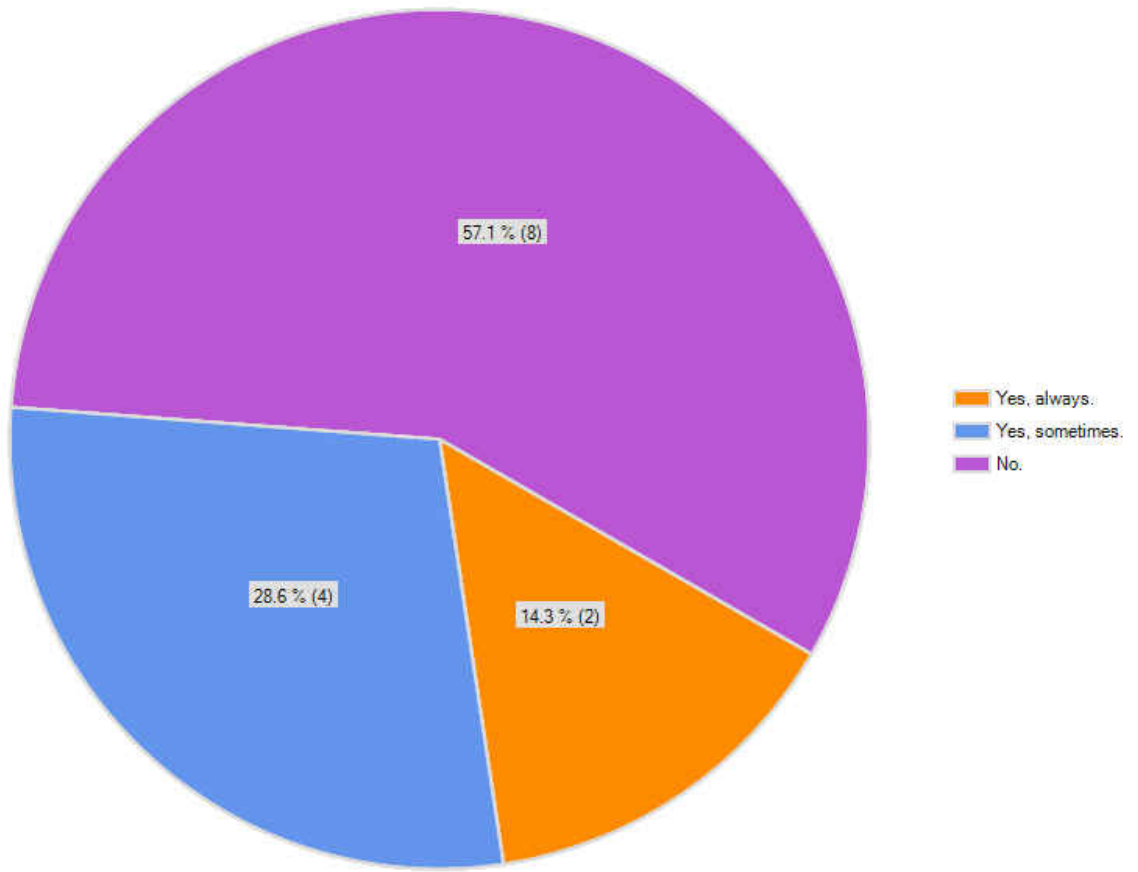
Figure 27: Percentage of Cities That Have Outside Agency Continuously Searching
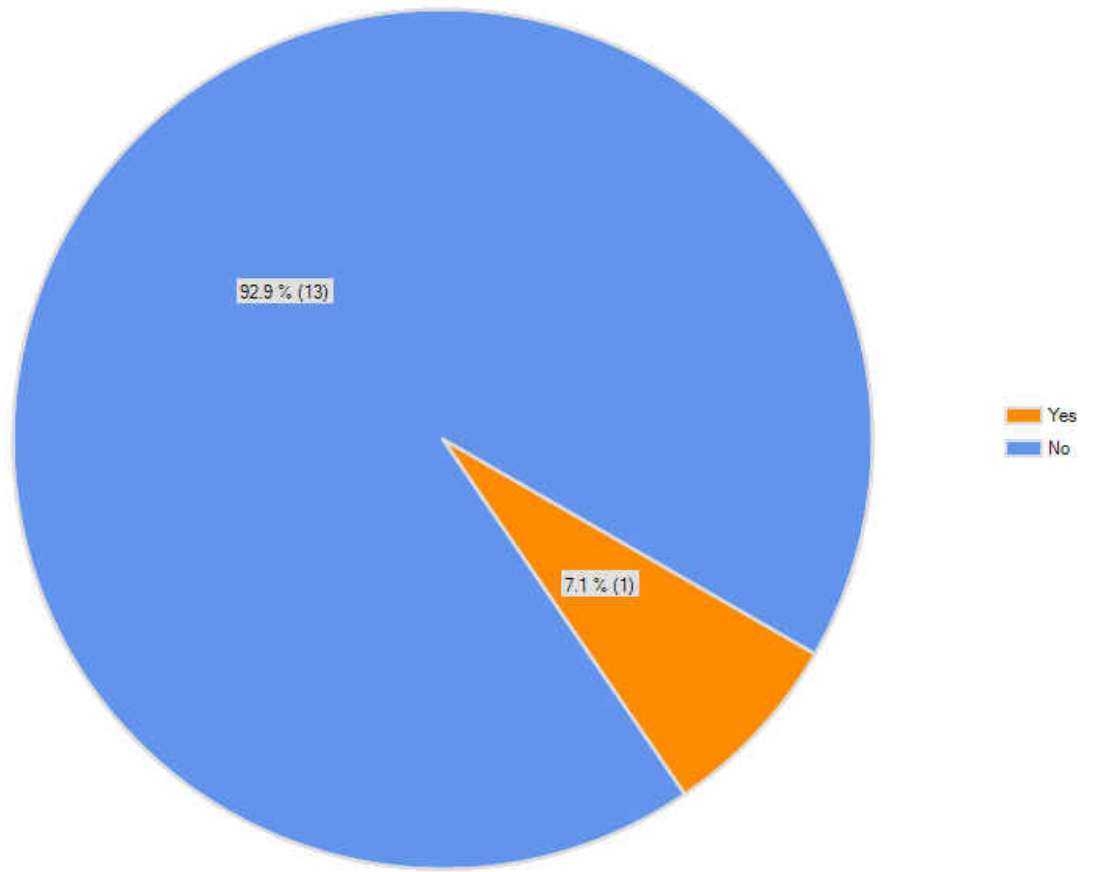
Figure 28: Percentage of Cities Having Grant Writing Policies Established by Council
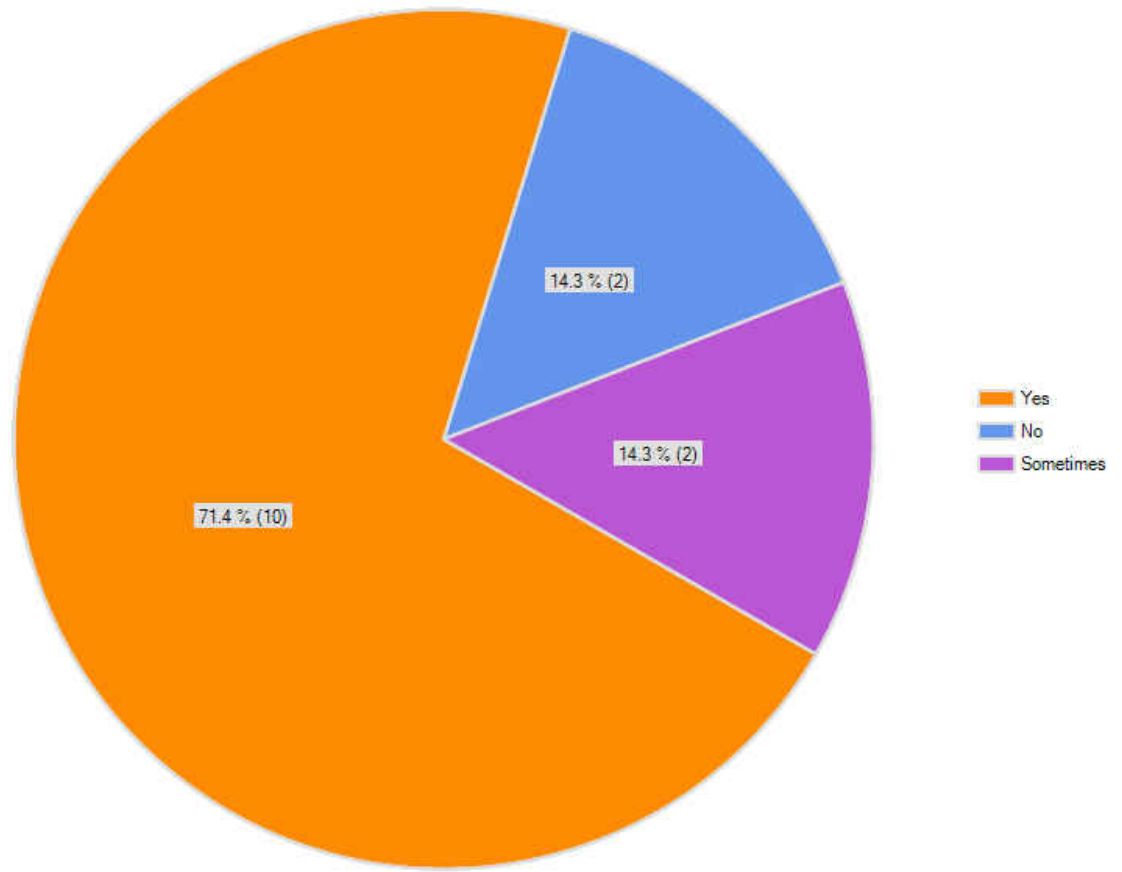
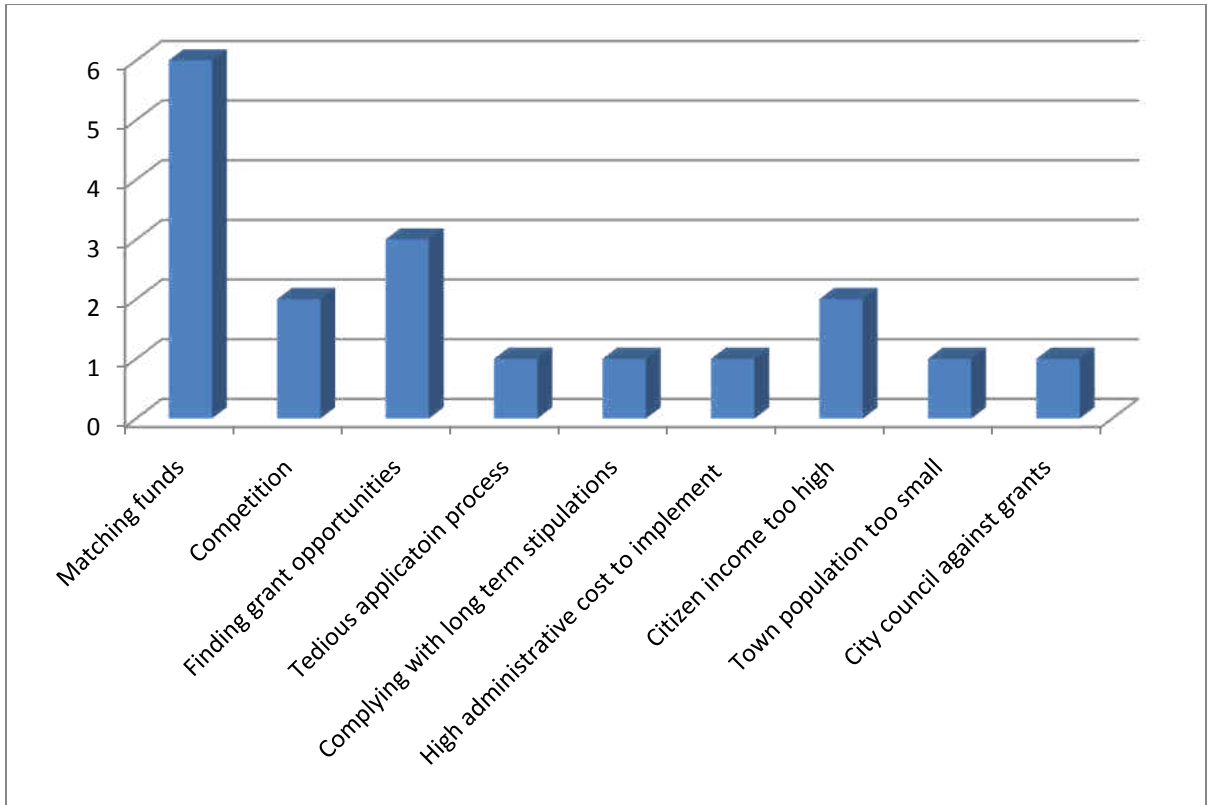Figure 29: Percentage of Cities That Have Found Grants To Be Beneficial
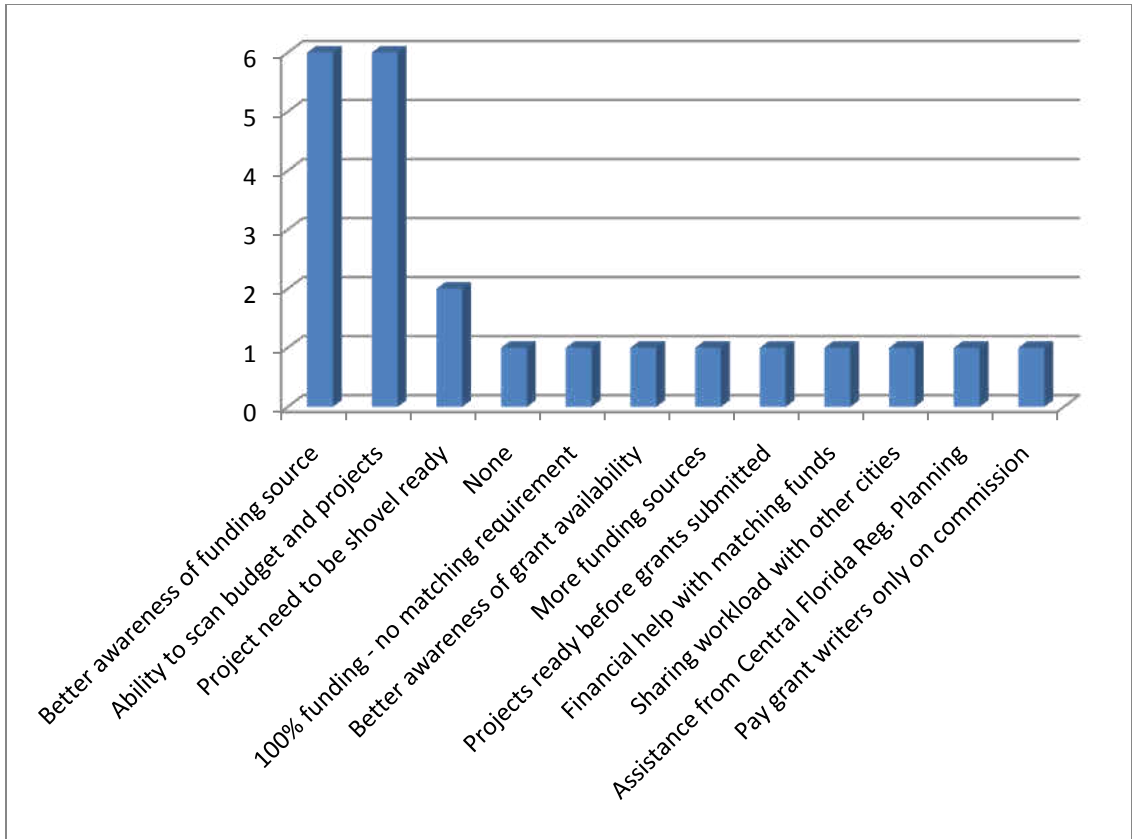
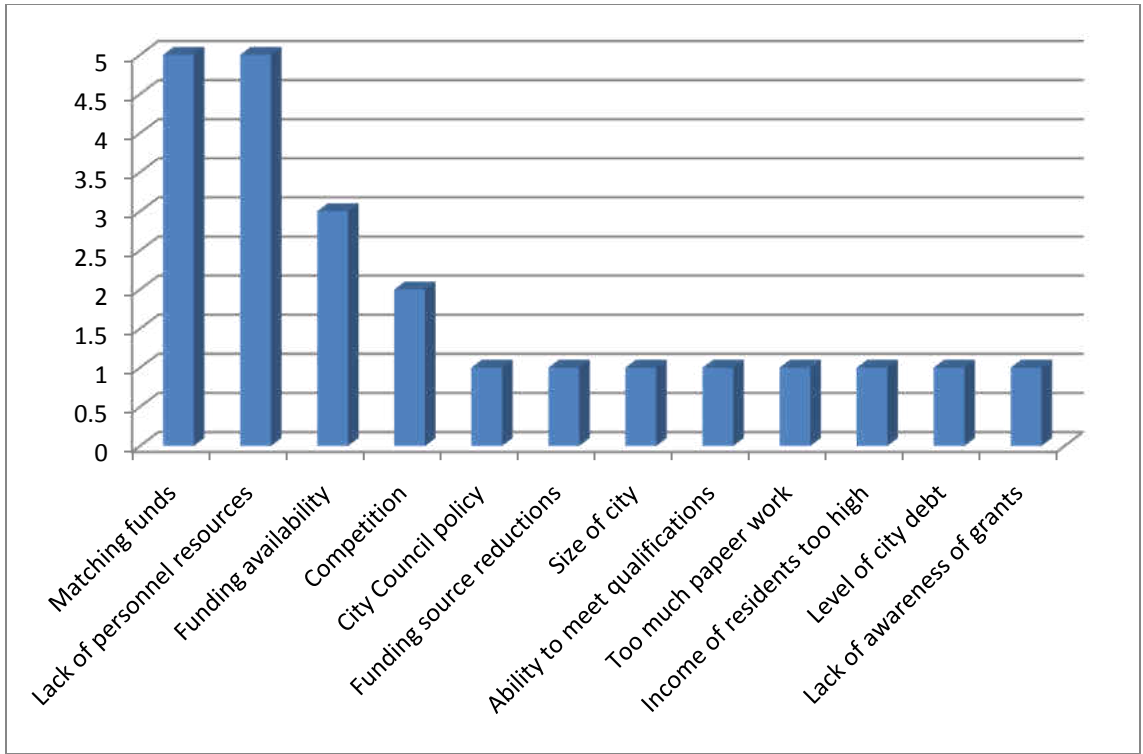Figure 30: Challenges and Obstacles

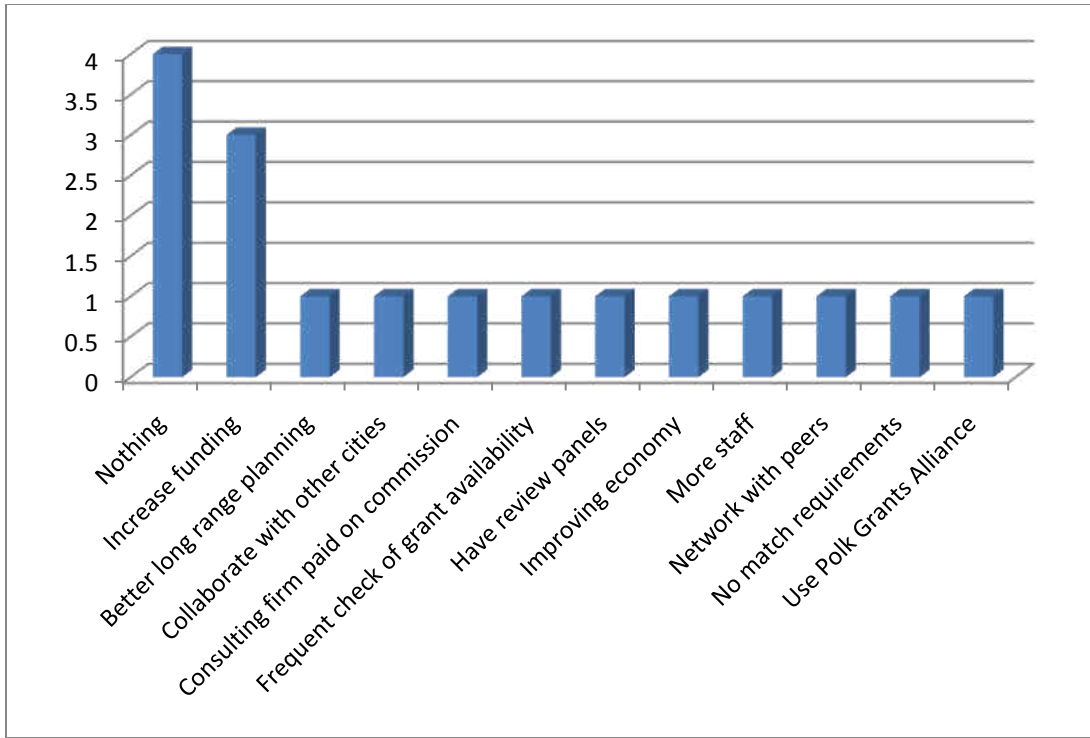Figure 31: Additional Assistance Needed

Figure 32: Primary Problems
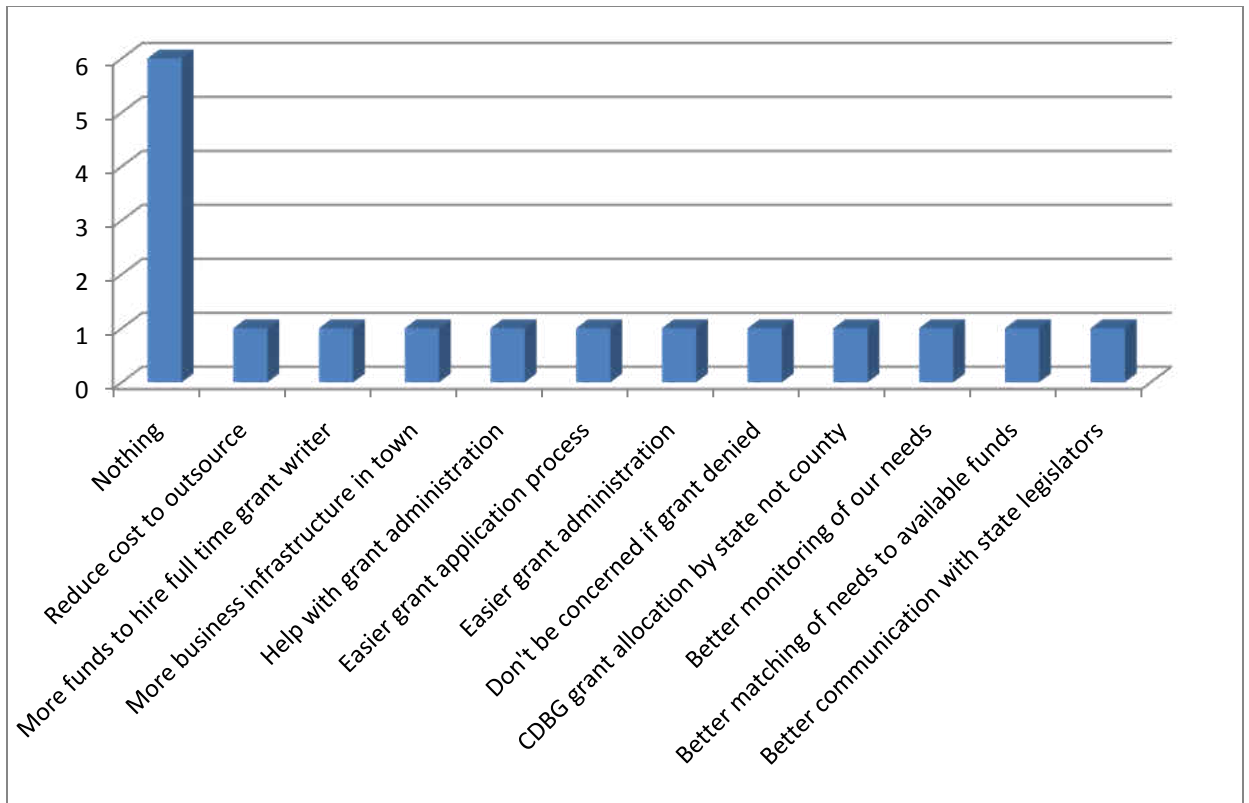
Figure 33: Solutions Offered

Figure 34: Additional Comments

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