

## COMMUNITY PARKS & RECREATION GRANTS PROGRAM

### A PROGRAM OF MISSOULA COUNTY PARKS, TRAILS & RECREATION

#### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Missoula County Parks, Trails & Recreation is actively seeking partners (e.g., community groups, municipalities, recreational associations, etc.) to create and enhance public recreation facilities in Missoula County. The Community Parks & Recreation Grants (formerly called the Matching Grants Program) provides financial support to these partners on a wide variety of capital improvement projects.

Publicly designated parks, school playgrounds, community centers, or other similar recreation sites within Missoula County but outside the City of Missoula qualify for funding.



#### HOW IT WORKS

A partner group has a great project idea but possesses limited funding or technical resources to implement the project. The partner group applies for the grant to cover costs of the project. Project costs are shared between Missoula County and the grant recipient – the County will reimburse up to 75% of the total project costs (only cash expenses are eligible for reimbursement), and the grant recipient must provide at least 25% of the total project costs (the grant recipient may provide their match through cash and/or in-kind contributions). Keep in mind – the grant recipient will need to have their own funding to cover the costs of the project until they can seek reimbursement.

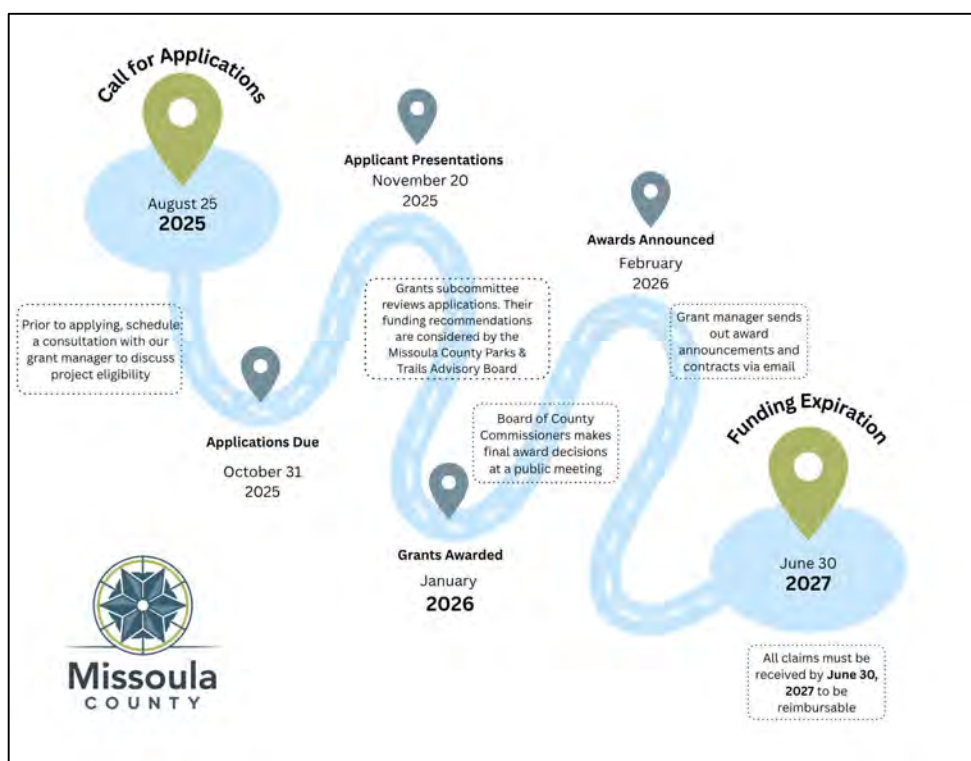
**Community Parks & Recreation Grant Program Funding Amount:** Beginning in the 2025 grant cycle, \$90,000 is made available each year for community driven projects that meet the outlined program criteria. Projects occurring on property operated by Parks, Trails and Recreation will be prioritized, however all projects occurring in Missoula County outside of the City of Missoula qualify for funding.

There is no minimum or maximum limit for a request to fund a project. An organization can submit only one grant application per grant cycle.

**Match Requirement:** At least 25% of the total project costs must be provided by the grant recipient. The match may consist of cash the grant recipient contributes to the project and/or in-kind contributions (donated materials, consulting services, volunteer labor).

**Project Grant Funds:** The Community Parks & Recreation Grant Program is a reimbursement-based grant program. The County will only reimburse up to 75% of total project costs and will only reimburse actual cash expenses. If awarded, the grant recipient may receive reimbursement only after the grant recipient has expended funds on an eligible cash expense and submitted adequate documentation; in other words, the grant recipient must have available funding to cover cash expenditures until they are able to seek reimbursement from the County.

### GRANT PROGRAM TIMELINE



### APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY & FUNDING ALLOCATION

Tribal, federal, state, or local government agencies, including their administrative divisions (e.g., school districts), and non-governmental organizations (e.g., community groups or non-profit organizations) throughout Missoula County are eligible to apply. The proposed project must be located outside of the Missoula city limits and inside of Missoula County.

### PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Grant funds can be used to fund capital improvement projects that create or enhance *public recreation facilities* in Missoula County. These new amenities or improvements to an existing amenity need to add value and provide long term benefit (5 year minimum, but preferably longer).

Eligible projects include but are not limited to:

- Construction of:
  - Park amenities/facilities (ball courts, shelters, picnic tables, pathways, etc.)
  - Trail amenities (boardwalks, fencing, interpretation, trails signs, etc.)
- Storage space for equipment. Repair or replacement of an existing capital facility
- Projects that ensure compliance with industry standards (e.g., playground inspections/replacement of engineered wood fiber)
- Project planning associated with implementation
- Providing features to assist individuals with limited mobility (e.g., projects that bring a site/facility into compliance with the U.S. Access Board outdoor developed areas guidelines)

Ineligible project types include but are not limited to:

- Regular, ongoing maintenance (mowing, landscaping, painting, etc.)
- Purchase or maintenance of non-stationary, facility or recreational equipment (e.g., tractors, trailers, mowers, generators, replacement parts for machinery, sport uniforms, ice skates, etc.)
- Acquisition of easements and property
- Feasibility studies and preliminary planning
- Projects that displace fish and wildlife species, reduce habitat effectiveness, cause irreparable damage to vegetation, soils, water and wild public lands, and/or substantially increase conflicts
- Projects managed as profit making entities
- Projects that are currently under litigation in a court of law
- Projects that are not in compliance with all applicable state laws and county policy

**\*\*Prior to applying, a consultation with Parks, Trails & Recreation staff is required to see if your project meets eligibility criteria\*\***

**\*\*To be eligible for funding, the proposed project must have the prior approval of any associated land managing agency (e.g., MDT, MRL, USFS, FWP, etc.) \*\***

**\*\*If the proposed project is on county owned parkland, applicant must have preapproval via consultation with Parks, Trails & Recreation staff prior to applying\*\***

## FUNDING CRITERIA

Considering the individual needs of each park and available funding, projects that show the following will be given priority:

### **Demonstrated need and community support (x2)**

The application shows a clear need/demand for the proposed project. Need/demand may be demonstrated with planning documents, formal agreements, research/data, photos, letters of support, etc.

- a) Improves the balance in facility/park types for the community
- b) Involves community or neighborhood participation and support
- c) Supported by additional cash funding or in-kind contributions from other organizations
- d) Aligns with an adopted community planning document

**Project resiliency and maintenance considerations (x1)**

- a) Demonstrates a sustainable plan for continued maintenance (e.g., volunteer services, identified maintenance funding, condition of other facilities managed by applicant)
- b) Reduces or eliminates liability
- c) Reduces the overall maintenance required for the park or trail

**Recreational opportunity (x2)**

- a) Expands recreational opportunity(s) for a variety of user groups
- b) Provides increased recreational access for nontraditional trail users (e.g., persons with limited mobility, senior citizens, individuals living within opportunity areas)
- c) Increases the quality and/or amount of natural habitat or open space

**Application completeness and project feasibility (x1)**

- a) Demonstrated track record of effective project implementation and/or clearly outlined project plan (including budget, timelines, and funding strategy)
- b) All required application attachments are included
- c) Financial and/or in-kind capability of the applying entity and project location within Missoula County is clearly outlined

**SCORING PROCESS**

Applications will be scored according to the funding criteria listed above. Each scoring category will be assigned a score from 0-10 with some categories having a weighted multiplier (x1 or x2). Two scores will be generated: a Parks, Trails & Recreation staff score and a Community Parks & Recreation Grants Subcommittee score. These two scores will be averaged to create an overall average score. The overall average score is placed in a ranked recommendation list, which includes summarized notes from reviewers. This recommendation list is provided as an appendix to the board packet for the Parks & Trails Advisory Board prior to the funding decision meeting.

**FURTHER EXPLANATION OF COUNTY REIMBURSEMENT**

The County will only reimburse the grant recipient for actual cash expenditures. The County will not reimburse the grant recipient for any in-kind contributions; however, those in-kind contributions will continue to count as match contribution for the total project costs. In order to receive reimbursement, the grant recipient must be able to provide a copy of the paid invoice as well as a cancelled check (front and back), if paid by check.

**FURTHER EXPLANATION OF MATCH**

Match contributions are project costs that are not reimbursed by the County. Rather, they are contributed by you (the recipient) or a third party (a project partner or beneficiary). Match is also known as “cost share” because you are sharing in the government’s costs for your project.

There are two types of accepted match:

**Cash match** is a contribution of actual cash to the project or a project-related expense that can be verified. It can range from cash donations, to the expense of hiring a contractor, to building supplies associated with the project. To be recognized as a valid cash match, a copy of the invoice as well as a cancelled check (front and back), if paid by check, will need to be provided to Parks, Trails & Recreation staff.

**In-kind match** is a non-cash contribution. In-kind contributions may take the form of donated supplies, facilities, services, equipment, or volunteer labor. General volunteer labor is when a person provides labor for standard, general work that they are not an expert in. The Community Parks & Recreation Grants Program uses a set rate to quantify the contribution for this labor based on state and national trends. Currently, that rate is \$20 per hour for the 2025 grant cycle. To be recognized as valid in-kind match, documentation (e.g. invoice, volunteer form, or letter of donation) must be submitted that indicates the value of the in-kind contribution and that the vendor or volunteer has donated the value of the goods, services or time.

Whether cash or in-kind, every match contribution must be:

- An eligible Community Parks & Recreation Grant activity
- Clearly tied to the proposed project scope
- Incurred after the project start date (except design/engineering costs which may be incurred up to twelve months before the project start date)
- Guaranteed at the time of application

Match contributions can be comprised of cash, in-kind contributions, or be a combination of both these sources. Regardless of source, a recipient's match contribution must have a total value of at least 25% of the total project cost.

**Match/Reimbursement Example:** A local community group receives a \$ \$7,500 grant to construct a community garden space. Total project cost estimated at \$10,000.

PROJECT SUMMARY				
Total Project Cost	\$10,000			
Applicant Match Contribution	\$2,500			
County Grant Amount	\$7,500			
PROJECT DETAIL	Cost	Type	Match Contribution	Grant Reimbursement
Lumber & Fasteners	\$4,000	Cash	\$0	\$4,000.00
Soil & Compost	\$3,500	Cash	\$0	\$3,500.00
Irrigation System	\$1,000	Cash	\$1,000.00	\$0
Startup Seed Donation	\$500	In-Kind	\$500.00	\$0
Garden Construction-volunteer labor	\$1,000	In-Kind	\$1,000.00	\$0

## COMMUNITY PARKS & RECREATION GRANT APPLICATION FORM

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

1. Name of Park, Trail, or Recreation Area: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Location of Park, Trail, or Recreation Area: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Name of Sponsoring Organization (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Name of Organization Representative: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Project summary: briefly describe the proposed project.
  6. Has this site or facility previously received County funds? ☐Yes ☐No If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_
  7. How much money are you requesting for this project? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  8. How many hours of volunteer labor are expected to be used? \_\_\_\_\_ x \$20/hr. = \_\_\_\_\_
  9. What is the expected value of donated materials? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  10. How much money will your organization contribute to the project? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  11. What is the total cost\* of this project? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
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### DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION

1. Names of Board Officers (if applicable)  
President:  
Vice President:  
Secretary:  
Treasurer:
2. Years in existence:

3. Organization's previous community service:

4. Please attach all available items to your application:

☐ Organization's annual budget ☐ Map(s) of the location ☐ Any letters of support

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## PRESENT SITE CONDITION

1. Approximate acreage:
2. List any facilities presently on-site:
3. List adjacent property owners and uses (if recreational activities are present):
4. Describe the accessibility to general public (hours, seasons, any other access restrictions):

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## PROPOSED PROJECT

### **Describe the project in detail below.**

Please submit answers to each of the prompts below. Additional consideration will be given to projects addressing needs within the Parks, Trails & Recreation system or within an opportunity area.

1. Outline the need and community support – explain how your project:
  - Improves the balance in facility/park types for the community
  - Involves community or neighborhood participation and support
  - Supported by additional cash funding or in-kind contributions from other organizations
  - Aligns with an adopted community planning document

Need/demand may be demonstrated with planning documents, formal agreements, research/data, photos, letters of support, etc.

2. Project resiliency and maintenance considerations – Include or attach a plan for continued maintenance (e.g., volunteer services, identified maintenance funding, condition of other facilities managed by applicant). Explain how your project reduces or eliminates liability and/or reduces the overall maintenance required for the recreational facility.



3. Recreational opportunity – explain how your project:

- Expands recreational opportunity(s) for a variety of user groups
- Provides increased recreational access for nontraditional trail users (e.g., persons with limited mobility, senior citizens, individuals living within opportunity areas)
- Increases the quality and/or amount of natural habitat or open space

## ITEMIZED PROJECT BUDGET

Provide an estimated project budget in the table below. Please include a brief description of each expense/contribution to determine if it is a qualified grant expense or activity.

ITEM DESCRIPTION	COST	CASH OR IN-KIND?
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
<b>Totals</b>	\$	

1. Outline the project implementation schedule & demonstrate match is secured:

2. Request for match reduction – An applicant that foresees difficulties meeting the full 25% match requirement may request a match reduction. Please outline the reasons why your organization will have trouble meeting the full match requirement and indicate the amount of match you are able to provide. \*Please note that applications requesting a match reduction will be scored lower according to the funding criteria.

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## LONG RANGE PLAN

1. Describe how this project relates to the long-range plans for site improvement

## COMMUNITY PARKS & RECREATION GRANT PROGRAM

### CONDITIONS FOR USE AND PAYMENT OF FUNDS

1. The Recipient shall receive all match funds when the project is complete and required documentation has been received and approved by Missoula County, including documentation that non-County owned sites will be accessible to the general public. The Recipient may choose to receive payment of match funds by dividing the project into two or more major sub-projects and then requesting partial payment as each sub-project is finished.
2. The County shall reimburse the recipient for up to 75% of the total project costs, not to exceed the award amount, on receipt of the following: copies of invoices and/or sales receipts, copies of all canceled checks (front and back) if paid by check, credit card statement showing the charge if paid for by credit card, documentation of match, and a written completion report, which is consistent with the Recipient's approved application and any conditions stated in the agreement. Photos are appreciated. The County reserves the right to make on-site visits and/or require the Recipient to provide additional documentation before payment of match funds.
3. The County reserves the right to review and approve all proposed project match, including time, labor, materials, services, or other expenses. Recipient is responsible for all matched funds. The County may elect to revoke a Community Parks & Recreation Grant should the required match become unavailable.
4. In all instances wherein the Recipient has ordered and received materials and/or services, it shall be the Recipient's responsibility to pay vendor in full.
5. The County will not make cash advances to the Recipient.
6. Reimbursement of individuals or other third parties who purchase goods and services used on the project is the responsibility of the Recipient.
7. Contractors and other service providers who operate equipment or perform work on utilities (gas, water, electrical, sewer), whether performing such service for compensation or as a donation, must provide a copy of their insurance certificate and may be required to obtain regulatory permits before commencing work. Evidence of workers' compensation insurance or proof of exemption is also required. Recipients are asked not to solicit the services, paid or donated, of vendors or other individuals who are unable to meet these requirements.
8. The County reserves the right to withhold reimbursement if the Recipient fails to adhere to these conditions. The County also reserves the right to audit the Recipient's use of match funds.