

# OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT PROGRAM

## 2023 PROGRAM MANUAL



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## **I. PROGRAM INFORMATION**

The [Outdoor Recreation Grant Program](#) assists local governments in acquiring parkland and developing or redeveloping outdoor recreation facilities in local and community parks throughout the state.

Metro Regional Parks and Greater Minnesota Regional Parks are not eligible for funding under this program. Funding for designated regional parks and trails is available from the [Metropolitan Council](#) and the [Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trails Commission](#).

For answers to frequently asked questions about this program, please see our [FAQs](#).

### **DEADLINE**

March 31, 2023.

### **FUNDING**

There are two sources of funding for the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program: federal and state funds. Federal funds come from the [Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#). Federal funding available for FY 2024 has not yet been allocated but should be at least \$2.5 million for the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program and the [Natural and Scenic Areas Grant Program](#).

State funding available for FY 2024 is a portion of \$1.1 million from “In Lieu Of” lottery proceeds available for three Park and Trail grant programs. Additional state Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund dollars may be recommended by the [Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources \(LCCMR\)](#) (link is external). Other state funding may be available but is subject to Legislative approval. Final amounts available will not be known until after the legislative session ends.

### **GRANT AWARDS AND MATCH REQUIREMENTS**

Grants are reimbursed based up to 50 percent of the total eligible costs. The maximum grant award is \$350,000 (for a total project of \$700,000). The match can consist of cash, the value of materials, labor and equipment usage by the local sponsor, donations or any combination thereof. Applicants who provide, at least, 20% of the match from their own resources and/or have their match committed at the time of the application will receive additional consideration in the review.

Unskilled volunteer labor is valued, for this grant program, at \$9.00 per hour. Skilled volunteer labor is valued at its going rate. The invoice/letter must be on a company letterhead, detailing the work completed and the amount of the donation.

## ***ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS***

Cities, counties, and townships.

Note: The applicant must be the current or intended owner and manager of the property to be acquired or developed. Multi-organization collaboration is not required for this program.

## ***ELIGIBLE PROJECTS***

- Acquisition of land for future development of outdoor recreation facilities. Before the close of the grant, there must be public access, including parking and funding acknowledgement signs. Recreation facilities must be developed within three years of the date of acquisition.
- Development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities on land owned by the applicant. Ownership must be fee title or permanent easement.
- A combination of land acquisition and development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities.

## ***ELIGIBLE RECREATION FACILITIES***

One or more of the following major recreation facilities must be included in a proposed project:

- Boat/Canoe Access Sites
- Campgrounds
- Fishing Piers/Shore Fishing Areas
- Skating Rinks/Parks
- Nature Study/Observation Areas
- Picnic Shelters
- Playgrounds, including nature playgrounds
- Sports Fields and Courts
- Swimming Beaches and Outdoor Pools
- Splash Pads
- Trails (non-motorized internal park trails)

It is our expectation that all existing and proposed facilities have accessible walkways to them. Please account for this in your project/budget.

### ***ELIGIBLE RECREATION SUPPORT FACILITIES***

The following support facilities are also eligible for funding as part of a grant application that contains at least one facility from the eligible recreation facilities list above.

- Change houses, restrooms, shower buildings and warming houses
- Fencing, lighting and signs
- Landscaping and natural area restoration
- Park roads and parking areas (may not exceed 40% of the total project cost)
- Fixed park furnishings such as benches, drinking fountains, grills, picnic tables, trash receptacles and fire pits
- Walkways or accessible routes that connect one facility to another

### ***INELIGIBLE FACILITIES AND EXPENSES***

Ineligible facilities or expenses are items that may not be funded by the grant or included as part of the local match requirement. The following list includes common types of ineligible facilities. A determination of eligibility will be made by the DNR.

- Construction of any facility on land not owned by the applicant/grant recipient
- Acquisition of land already in public ownership
- Any expenditure that occurs outside the dates of the grant contract
- Facilities not available for general public use
- Administrative expenses such as indirect costs, contingency allowances, archeological surveys, and legal fees
- Design and engineering fees in excess of 10% of the total construction cost
- Construction of indoor recreational facilities (i.e., ice arenas, enclosed swimming pools, etc.), concession-only buildings, press boxes, golf courses, shooting ranges and motorized trails
- Decorative fountains, statues, and plaques
- Non-permanent skate park ramps
- Sewer to individual campsites
- Historic signage

## ***LAND RETENTION REQUIREMENTS***

**All land improved or acquired with assistance from this grant program must be retained and operated solely for outdoor recreation into perpetuity.**

The Boundary Map submitted with your application will delineate and establish the property boundaries subject to the grant agreement. Therefore, it is very important that any existing public facilities and any known future public facilities (e.g., wells, lift stations, roadway improvements, etc.) are clearly identified and excluded from the boundaries of the project. All rights-of-way, easements, reversionary interests, etc. within the boundary area should also be designated. The Boundary Map should include only the property that the project sponsor plans on managing for outdoor recreation uses in perpetuity.

## ***DEED RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT***

Before the final reimbursement can be made and the grant can close, the Grantee will be required to record a condition with the deed of the real property funded by the grant contract that notifies the public of the grant and the grant program requirements. This requirement is for all projects acquisition and development. The specific deed restriction language varies depending on the source of grants and will be outlined in the grant contract. This deed restriction is filed at the county. Be sure to send a copy of the filing to program staff.

## ***CONVERSION OF USE***

The Grantee shall not, at any time, convert this property to non-outdoor recreation uses without the prior written approval of the State acting, through the DNR and, for federal grants, the NPS. The DNR will consider a conversion request only after the following pre-requisites have been met:

1. All practical alternatives to the conversion have been evaluated and rejected on a sound basis.
2. The Grantee has agreed to replace the converted lands with other lands of, at least, equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent recreational usefulness as determined by the State.

The DNR shall have the authority to approve or disapprove state conversion requests. For federal grants, the NPS will approve or disapprove the conversion request. Approval of a conversion request is dependent on completion of the [Conversion of Use](#) process.

## **II. THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

The application is available to download from the [Outdoor Recreation Grant Program website](#). We urge applicants to begin the application process early to allow time to complete application requirements such as obtaining community involvement and completion of appraisals (for land acquisition projects).

Only one park may be included in an application and only one application per park. Applicants are eligible to submit more than one application and receive more than one grant. Significant progress must be completed on active projects before an additional proposal can be submitted. Outstanding or unresolved conversions may also prevent an applicant from being eligible for this program.

**DEADLINE: March 31, 2023.**

Staff are available to discuss your project. If you would like feedback on your draft application, submit it by March 10<sup>th</sup>.

Use the form provided for each item or reproduce it in the same format. Use [Application Check-List](#) as your cover sheet. To submit your application, format the entire application, including all attachments, as one “pdf” and email it to [Parkgrants.DNR@state.mn.us](mailto:Parkgrants.DNR@state.mn.us) by **March 31**. Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be eligible for funding consideration.

After submission, make sure you receive a confirmation email that your application arrived in a useable form by the due date. Applications submitted in an unusable format will not be considered for funding. Paper submission of applications are no longer be accepted.

### **COMPETITIVE REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

The program is competitive and requires a review and selection process to make funding determinations and awards. This will take place after the grant deadline, and funding announcements will be made in summer. Program staff will review applications. The review will focus on priorities set in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and project specific criteria identified below.

### **MINNESOTA’S 2020-2024 STATE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)**

Applications are assessed to ensure that the proposed project is consistent with identified priorities established in Minnesota’s [2020-2024 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#) (SCORP). The SCORP provides guidance and direction to the state’s outdoor recreation



providers for their work in protecting, maintaining and enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities for the state's residents and visitors.

The SCORP identifies current and future trends affecting outdoor recreation in Minnesota including issues around public health; addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion challenges; demographic changes in Minnesota's population; climate change impacts and accessibility. Taken together, these trends and the strategies within the Strategic Directions represent both challenges and opportunities for Minnesota's outdoor recreation providers for the next five years. The intention is that the 2020-2024 SCORP will aid these agencies and organizations as they plan for and invest in facilities and programs to meet the outdoor recreation interests of Minnesota's residents and visitors.

### ***SELECTION PRIORITIES***

**SCORP Plan (60%)** - Selection criteria are based on priority actions identified under the following three strategic directions in the SCORP.

#### **How Does the Project Connect People to the Outdoors?**

- How does the proposed project design and redevelop outdoor recreation facilities so that they can accommodate varying forms of transportation to sites (e.g., driving, walking, biking)?
- How does the proposed project design, develop, rehabilitate and manage outdoor recreation facilities to encourage use by people with all abilities and diverse backgrounds (e.g., accessible seating, bathrooms, drinking water, shade opportunities, informational signs, safety features)?
- How does the proposed project provide high-quality experiences to visitors through thoughtful design, programming, and interpretation (e.g., does the project develop or expand facilities to provide high quality experiences and/or interpretive signs)?

#### **Does the Project Acquire Land and/or Create Opportunities?**

- Is the proposed project located in a densely settled area or area of rapid population growth?
- Does the proposed project accelerate the acquisition of private in-holdings and add lands to existing parks to enhance resource protection and recreational opportunities?
- Does the proposed project acquire exceptional one-time opportunities of unique, high-quality natural resources that meet critical needs outside of regional centers?
- Does the proposed project acquire land to connect protected and high-quality natural resource corridors?
- Does the proposed project acquire land that protects important water resources including lakes, rivers, wetlands, shoreline, and critical watersheds?
- How does the proposed project design, develop, and/or redevelop facilities that meet the differing outdoor recreation needs for people of all abilities (e.g., a quality natural

setting for a high-quality recreational experience, universal design, family friendly facilities, more separation of uses, tent and RV and privacy between site for camping, etc.)?

- How does the proposed project create an accessible environment that is open and flexible to accommodate new and emerging nature-based recreation uses (e.g., facility design that supports numerous activities, maintains large open play areas, incorporates emerging nature-based activities, etc.)?
- How does the proposed project develop infrastructure and amenities that meet the needs and interests of future generations and diverse communities (e.g., develop group-based opportunities such as group campsites, group picnic areas, and gathering spaces used by diverse communities. Offers amenities that meet the lifestyles of our target markets such as wireless internet, playgrounds, family bathrooms, areas for specialized interest, etc.)?
- Is the proposed project designed and constructed with sustainable and resilient infrastructure (e.g., rely on up-to-date green infrastructure and best practice designs, is energy efficient, easy to maintain and uses recycled/recyclable materials, conserve the use of water at facilities and/or design facilities to effectively manage storm water onsite.)?

#### **Does the Project Take Care of What We Have?**

- Does the proposed project result in redevelopment, renovation or rehabilitation of existing infrastructure to ensure high-quality and safe experiences for the public (e.g., roof replacement, structural replacement, trail resurfacing, trail head amenities refurbished, campgrounds rehabbed and updated, bring facilities up to modern codes and standards, and/or make it easy for everyone to access and enjoy parks and trails)?
- Does the project sponsor maintain a capital asset management plan to ensure protection and full utilization of the proposed facilities (Yes or No, describe)?
- Does the proposed project preserve existing high-quality natural areas and water resources?
- Does the proposed project restore and reconstruct natural communities that have been degraded or lost due to agriculture or development?

#### **Additional Non-SCORP Review Components (40%)**

- Project Specific Criteria including cost vs. benefit, application and project quality and local match.
- Park and Facility Design: Use & design are compatible with site, makes good use of available space, avoids conflicts among facilities and avoids conflicts with adjacent uses.
- Health and Safety: Consider health and safety risks.
- Appropriate Design Standards: All facilities must be accessible and designed consistent with standards.
- Environmental Intrusions: All non-recreational intrusions are documented, and the impact has been considered in the park design. All power lines serving the park facilities must be placed underground.

## ***PROJECT SITE EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS***

This program requires all applicants to prepare the [Project Site Evaluation](#). This evaluation will provide information necessary to determine the impacts of the project, if any, on the environmental and cultural resources of the project area. It is very important, therefore, that the project site evaluation identify all possible impacts of the proposed project. This will help determine whether any changes in project scope or design may be required or whether mitigation measures must be undertaken. Use the resources below to help you fill out the evaluation.

### ***ENDANGERED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT RESOURCES***

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) Report](#) provides a list of species and other resources such as critical habitat (collectively referred to as trust resources) under the USFWS' jurisdiction that are known or expected to be in or near the project area. The list may also include trust resources that occur outside of the project area, but that could potentially be directly or indirectly affected by activities in the project area. However, determining the likelihood and extent of effects a project may have on trust resources typically requires gathering additional site-specific (e.g., vegetation/species surveys) and project-specific (e.g., magnitude and timing of proposed activities) information.

### ***MINNESOTA LIST OF ENDANGERED AND THREATENED ANIMAL SPECIES***

Additional information on animals and plants that are endangered, threatened or merit special consideration or management is available from the Minnesota Natural Heritage Program/Nongame Wildlife Program, Section of Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A booklet entitled [Minnesota's List of Endangered and Threatened Animal Species](#), that includes a list of all species of Minnesota's animals and plants listed under the provisions of the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, Public Law 93-205, and/or Minnesota Statute 84.0895, is available from the DNR by calling (651) 296-6157 or (888) 646-6367 or at the DNR website [Minnesota's Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species](#).

Additional information may be obtained by calling the Division of Ecological Resources information number at (651) 259-5100. The DNR is also developing biological surveys on a county-by-county basis on sensitive natural habitats and rare plant and animal species. Several publications are available which provide detailed information on these subjects. Additional information about county biological surveys is available at [Minnesota Biological Survey](#).

### ***WETLANDS RESOURCES***

Minnesota has adopted a "no-net-loss" wetlands policy. Each state agency must ensure that its activities, including state sponsored, financed, or assisted projects, do not contribute to the loss or diminishment of the many important values of wetlands. Unavoidable impacts must be minimized, and compensatory mitigation must be provided for all values that have been lost or

diminished. The basic reference for wetland determination will be the [National Wetlands Inventory](#) produced by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and available at the DNR. Questions regarding implementation of the "no-net-loss" policy and identification of wetlands may be directed to the Ecological Resources Division, DNR at (651) 259-5100.

#### USFWS INFORMATION FOR PLANNING AND CONSULTATION (IPAC) REPORT

The program requires the review of your project by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) Report](#) to provide a list of species and other resources such as critical habitat (collectively referred to as trust resources) under the USFWS' jurisdiction that are known or expected to be in or near the project area. The list may also include trust resources that occur outside of the project area, but that could potentially be directly or indirectly affected by activities in the project area. However, determining the likelihood and extent of effects a project may have on trust resources typically requires gathering additional site-specific (e.g., vegetation/species surveys) and project-specific (e.g., magnitude and timing of proposed activities) information.

From the website, click on "Get Started" then enter a location, define the area, and confirm the area where the project activities will occur. Then click on "Continue," and a resource list will be generated that can be printed.

#### REVIEW FOR POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HISTORICAL/ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

[Minnesota Statute 138.665 Subd. 2](#) states, "Before carrying out any undertaking that will affect designated or listed properties, or funding or licensing an undertaking by other parties, the state department or agency shall consult with the State Historic Preservation Office pursuant to the society's established procedures to determine appropriate treatments and to seek ways to avoid and mitigate any adverse effects on designated or listed properties."

#### MINNESOTA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO) DATA REQUEST

This program requires a data search for previously known archaeological sites and historic properties in the project area. A data search can be requested by sending an email to [DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us](mailto:DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us) with the township, section, range of the park. The data search will provide a listing of historical and archeological sites near/or within the project area.

If your application is funded, the DNR will use the information from your SHPO Data Request to initiate the federal Section 106 and/or state review process with the SHPO. If during the Section 106 or state review process, the SHPO determines you need to complete a Phase I or Phase II survey, you will need to complete it prior to contract approval for development projects and prior to the final reimbursement for acquisition projects.

For projects that have archeological and or historic properties identified with potential impacts, you will need to re-engage your public review process. You will need to identify consulting parties\*. The consulting parties and public need to have an opportunity to review and comment on the park plans in relation to the historic and archeological resources and potential impacts. The views of consulting parties and the public are essential to informed decision making. We encourage you to start consultation as early as possible.

\* Consulting party: individuals or organizations with demonstrated interest in the project. This interest could be legal, economic or interest in the project's effects on historic properties. The NPS, in concurrence with the SHPO and the appropriate Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), will evaluate and determine who will become a consulting party to the federal Section 106 review process.

### ***PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND USE***

Prior to the submission of your application, it is our expectation that you have engaged the general public, especially those homeowners and businesses near the proposed project. You may do this through public meetings, announcements in the newspaper, letters or flyers, newsletters, an announcement on your website, emails, or face-to-face meetings. The public must have an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. Information detailing your public participation process and comments received are required in your application.

All facilities within the park must be designed and available for general public use and open during typical park hours. This includes restrooms, picnic shelters, campgrounds, playgrounds, and other structures. For parks that include marina or campground facilities, an appropriate percentage of the berths/campground spaces must be available for short-term rental and an equitable method of allocating long-term rentals shall be used. All personal property must be removed at the end of each use season.

### ***AVAILABILITY TO USERS***

Public property, facilities and programs shall be open to entry by all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex. No person, on the basis of disability, shall be excluded from participation in any program or activity receiving assistance from this program. Discrimination on the basis of residence, including preferential reservation, membership or annual permit systems is prohibited except to the extent that reasonable differences in admission and other fees may be maintained. Fees charged to non-residents cannot exceed twice that charged to residents and must be comparable to fees charged at other state or local facilities.

All facilities within the park must be designed and available for general public use and open

during typical park hours. This includes restrooms, picnic shelters, campgrounds, playgrounds and other structures. For parks that include marina or campground facilities, a minimum of 50% of the berths/campground spaces must be available for short-term rental and an equitable method of allocating long-term rentals shall be used. All personal property must be removed at the end of each use season.

## ***ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS***

All facilities improved with this grant project must meet current Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards and the final guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas. All critical components of the park listed below must be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Critical components include:

- Accessible parking spaces serving each area of the park.
- Restrooms, if provided, must be accessible.
- Drinking water, if provided, must be accessible.
- Access routes to all recreation facilities must be provided. For this program, an access route must be a minimum of five feet wide, slip resistant, firm and stable.

If the restrooms and/or drinking water are not accessible to persons with disabilities or access routes are not provided to all facilities, you will need to include these costs in your Cost Breakdown.

The following guidelines will help you design your facilities. Copies can be ordered from the U.S. Access Board at (800) 872-2253 or downloaded from their website at [United States Access Board](#).

1. [ADA Accessibility Standards for Buildings and Facilities](#)

(For buildings and certain recreation facilities including playgrounds, recreational boating facilities, and fishing piers)

2. [Final Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas September 26, 2013](#)

(For outdoor developed areas such as campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, and beaches. These guidelines, developed for federal facilities subject to the Architectural Barriers Act, are to be used for facilities improved by this Outdoor Recreation Grant Program.)

In your application, you must describe how your proposed project meets the requirements under the ADA Standards, Final Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas and all critical components.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

It is the policy of the State to work to deliberately to avoid actual or potential conflict of interests related to grant-making and grant administration at both the individual and organizational levels.

A conflict of interest occurs when a person has actual or apparent duty or loyalty to more than one organization and the competing duties or loyalties may result in actions which are adverse to one or both parties. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical, improper, or illegal act results from it.

- **Actual Conflict of Interest**  
An actual conflict of interest occurs when a person's decision or action would compromise a duty to a party without taking immediate appropriate action to eliminate the conflict.
- **Potential Conflict of Interest**  
A potential conflict of interest may exist if a person has a relationship, affiliation, or other interest that could create an inappropriate influence if the person is called on to make a decision or recommendation that would affect one or more of those relationships, affiliations, or interests.

### Organizational Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest can also occur with an organization that is a grant applicant in a competitive grant process or grantee of a state agency.

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee's objectivity in carrying out the grant is impaired or compromised due to competing duties or loyalties
- A grantee, potential grantee or grant applicant has an unfair competitive advantage through being furnished unauthorized proprietary information or source selection information that is not available to all competitors.

The grantee must maintain an adequate Conflict of Interest Policy and, throughout the term of the contract, monitor and report any actual or potential conflicts of interest to the State. Grantees are expected to follow their own documented conflict of interest policy and procedures.

## **APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS (ACQUISITIONS ONLY)**

For applications that will be acquiring land, the application must include an appraisal report by a general real property appraiser licensed by the State of MN that meets the [Uniform Appraisal](#)

[Standards for Federal Land Acquisition \(UASFLA\)](#). This is the federal (“yellow book”) standards. The appraisal must include the DNR and the National Park Service (NPS) as intended users. The landowner or designated representative must be given an opportunity to accompany the appraiser during the inspection of the property. Appraisals must have an effective date within six months of the application deadline.

If your application is selected for funding, you may be required to submit a technical review of the appraisal report conducted by an appraiser who is not associated with the original appraiser and who is qualified to perform technical reviews under the UASFLA and 49 CFR Part 24.104. See [UASFLA](#) Section C-1 for further guidance on technical reviews.

### ***NATIVE RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS***

All restoration activities will require a restoration and management plan to be submitted prior to contract approval and must follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources’ [“Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines”](#) in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.

When restoration activities are completed using grant funds, the Grantee must conduct evaluations on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere. Evaluation reports must be submitted to the DNR.

The Grantee should consider contracting with the [Conservation Corps](#) for restoration activities.

### ***WATER PERMITS***

Development or alteration of shoreline adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, and other public water bodies may require a written permit issued by DNR. In addition, projects involving work within waters and wetlands may require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE). Grantees will be required to determine whether a water permit is required by contacting both the DNR and the COE directly. Contact Information:

[U.S Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Functions](#)

[Department of Natural Resources: Public Waters Work Permits](#)



## **CAMPGROUND PLAN APPROVAL**

All new and existing campgrounds and marinas must adhere to the [Local Grants Program Campground/Marina Rental Policy](#) and the state laws and rules set by the Minnesota Department of Health. A summary of these requirements is available at Summary of [General Requirements for Recreational Camping Areas](#). Grantees must submit plans and receive approval for the development of a recreational camping area to the MN Department of Health or your local health authority before construction begins. Upon completion of the campground, a license application, license fee and inspection by the area health inspector is required. A copy of the license must be submitted with your final payment request.

## **AWARD OF FUNDS**

All applicants will receive official written notification regarding their request for funding in the summer. If your proposed project has received preliminary approval for funding, you will be contacted regarding additional information requirements needed before a grant agreement can be processed. These requirements may include State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) review, permits and other details.

The project start date will be the fall of 2023 or later depending on requirements for environmental resources, historical and archeological resources, and federal approval, if applicable. All work must be completed by June 30, 2025. Most of our funding does not allow for a project extension beyond this date. Applicants should focus on projects that will be completed during the 2024 construction season. Any project costs incurred prior to the start date of the grant agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement.

## **GRANTS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Under [MN Statute 13.599](#), responses to a request for proposal are nonpublic until the application deadline is reached. At that time, the name and address of the Grantee, and the amount requested becomes public.

After the application evaluation process is completed, data (except trade secret data) becomes public. Data created during the evaluation process is nonpublic until the negotiation of the grant agreement with the selected Grantee(s) is completed.

[MN Statute 13.44](#) categorizes estimated or appraised value of real property prior to purchase and sale as confidential data on individuals or protected nonpublic data. See also [Minnesota Government Data Privacy Act](#) for more information. This information, along with corresponding budget information, will be redacted from the applications before making them public.

### **III. ADMINISTERING THE GRANT**

Now that you've been awarded the grant, you have to administer it. The first thing to do is read the grant agreement contract to make sure you understand all the requirements (e.g., grant end date). If you have questions or concerns, contact program staff.

#### **REQUESTING REIMBURSEMENTS**

Attachment A – Budget of the grant agreement contract outlines the different items of the project. All these items must be completed as proposed by the grant end date. In order to be reimbursed for the full amount of the grant, you must spend the total cost of the project by the grant end date.

Any changes to the project description or significant changes to the cost breakdown must be submitted to and approved by the state's authorized representative identified in the grant agreement. Failure to notify the state's representative prior to initiating a change in the project could jeopardize receipt of the funds approved for the project.

Payment of grant funds is by reimbursement. You must initially pay project expenses and then claim reimbursement under the terms of the grant agreement. You may request no more than four reimbursements, if you anticipate needing more than four, please contact us.

#### **ELIGIBLE COSTS**

To be eligible for reimbursement, costs must be:

- Necessary for the completion of the project
- Incurred during the project period stated in the grant agreement
- Listed in the Cost Breakdown section of the Attachment A - Budget

To submit reimbursements, email the signed and dated Reimbursement Request Form and the Project Cost Summary Sheet along with copies invoices and evidence of payment to your Grants Manager. For project-related expenses incurred through direct use of your staff, equipment, or materials, use the "Force Account" forms: Force Account Labor, Force Account Equipment, Force Account Materials. For donations, use the Volunteer Labor Record, Volunteer Labor Summary, and Donated Equipment forms.

Please consult the [Reimbursement Manual](#) for more in-depth information or contact your Grants Manager.

#### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

It is the policy of the State to monitor progress on state grants by requiring Grantees to submit

written progress reports, at least, annually until all grant funds have been expended and all of the terms in the grant agreement have been met. Towards the end of the calendar year, a progress report form will be provided by program staff. Grant reimbursements shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless program staff have given the Grantee a written extension.

### ***MONITORING REQUIREMENTS***

It is the policy of the State to conduct, at least, one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000 and to conduct, at least, annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

### ***ACKNOWLEDGMENT SIGN***

All projects acquired or developed with assistance from this program must display a state approved funding acknowledgment sign at the main entrance to the park. The grant program staff will provide the specific sign information.

### ***CLOSEOUT PROCEDURES***

When you have completed your project as proposed, inform your Grants Manager so they can schedule an onsite final inspection with your staff. The inspection will focus on ensuring that the project was completed in accordance with the grant agreement contract, that facilities developed are accessible and a funding acknowledgment sign is installed.

Prior to final reimbursement of your grant and official closeout notification of your project, any issues that are revealed during the inspection must be corrected. In addition, the deed restriction must be filed at the county level and a copy sent to the Grants Manager. After outstanding issues have been addressed, you will receive a Closeout Letter from the Grants Manager, officially closing the grant.

All expenditures are subject to verification by an independent state audit and, therefore, you must retain all project records for a period of at least six years after you receive the official closeout notification letter.

#### ***IV. POST-COMPLETION GRANT RESPONSIBILITIES***

Congratulations! You've successfully completed your grant.

Regardless of the extent of assistance, these post-completion responsibilities apply to the parkland in the Boundary Map. Your post-completion grant responsibilities include posting a funding acknowledgment sign at the entrance of the park, maintaining and operating the facility so it's safe and inviting to the public, and retaining the land funded with this grant solely for outdoor recreation into perpetuity. That's right...into perpetuity. While the funded facilities may become obsolete over time, the parkland must be maintained and used for outdoor recreation into perpetuity. Make sure you keep the grant agreement contract in a place staff can find.

As part of post-completion responsibilities state staff will periodically inspect the parkland to ensure that the site is being properly operated and maintained and that no conversion of use has occurred. Any changes to assisted sites must be approved in advance.