



ARKANSAS
OFFICE OF
OUTDOOR RECREATION

MATCHING GRANT APPLICATION



FY26
**APPLICATION
GUIDE**

OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANTS PROGRAM

This guide is designed to assist you through the application process. All Outdoor Recreation Matching Grants are administered by the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact us.

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Introduction

This application guide provides an overview of the Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant, eligibility, requirements, and documents necessary to complete your grant application. Also included are explanations of required forms, procedures, and processes related to your application, and the selection process for awarding grant funds to successful applicants. Please call our office and we'll try to answer any questions that you may have. Good luck!

What is the Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant?

The Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant is a reimbursable matching grant that is administered through the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism (ADPHT). This grant provides financial assistance to applicants who wish to increase outdoor recreation opportunities in their community. Funding for this grant is provided through a portion of the state Real Estate Transfer Tax.

How Does the Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant Work?

An applicant who receives funding from the Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant may be reimbursed up to 50% of a project's allowable costs. When preparing an application, the applicant will estimate the total cost it will take to develop their proposed project. Once the total development cost is understood, the applicant will apply for funding that does not exceed one-half of the estimated total development costs. For example, if a project is estimated to cost \$100,000 to complete, the applicant will apply for \$50,000.

Applicants who are awarded a grant are called project sponsors. **Project sponsors do not receive funds before development occurs;** rather, project sponsors are responsible for bearing the initial costs of implementing the project. Project sponsors will be reimbursed 50% of all allowable expenses, up to the grant amount, after all or a portion of the grant project has been completed. The project sponsor may request reimbursement multiple times during the development phase or wait until the project is completed and request the full reimbursement. *Please note that grant funding cannot be increased after it has been awarded. Project sponsors are not penalized for going over the estimated cost, but they will not receive any funding beyond the initial award.*

Who is Eligible to Receive an Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant?

Funding assistance through an Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant is available to all incorporated municipalities and counties in Arkansas. Applications must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer – Mayor, City Manager, or County Judge – of the local government unit applying for assistance. While other interested groups, such as non-profits or advocacy groups, may provide donated funds, labor, or other assistance to the project, all expenses must be invoiced to, and paid by, the project sponsor to be eligible for reimbursement.

How Much Funding is Available?

There is no minimum or maximum request for funding. It is important to remember that, as a reimbursable grant, the Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant funds only half of an applicant's total project cost. While there is no maximum limit for Matching Grant awards, applicants will have to provide an equal match. Projects will be evaluated based on multiple factors including but not limited to: quality of project, demonstrated need, and available funding.

What Kinds of Projects are Eligible for Funding?

All eligible projects fall into one of three categories:

Development	Development projects include the construction, renovation, replacement, etc. of eligible outdoor recreation facilities
Acquisition	Acquisition projects involve the acquisition, either through purchase, donation, or other legal means, of real estate to be used in direct support of public outdoor recreation and/or conservation
Combination	Combination projects include both the acquisition of real property and development of eligible outdoor recreation facilities

Generally speaking, any outdoor recreation site, facility, or permanently mounted equipment (e.g., basketball goals and soccer goals) that will be open to the public is eligible for funding. Enclosed facilities that are in direct support of public outdoor recreation (e.g., restrooms and concession stands) are also eligible for funding. Higher consideration may be given for conventional outdoor recreation projects (as defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis) and facilities that enhance the natural world. These would include hiking/biking/running/equestrian trail infrastructure and facilities at trailheads, climbing infrastructure and facilities, infrastructure or facility improvements related to hunting or shooting, RV parks and campgrounds, fishing piers and bank fishing areas, and facilities at access points to waterways. Lower consideration may be given for projects that include dog parks, concession stands, amphitheaters, band facilities, and community pools.

Community centers and indoor facilities that do not directly support outdoor recreation are not eligible for funding. Programming, staffing, and other ongoing costs (such as routine maintenance) are likewise ineligible. Please consult with your Project Officer if you have any specific questions about the eligibility of proposed facilities.

What May a Project Sponsor Use as Their Match?

Along with funds from the project sponsor's bank account(s), the project sponsor's match may come from materials purchased by the project sponsor, employee labor provided by the project sponsor, and the use of equipment owned by the project sponsor. Donated labor, services, equipment use, material, and/or the value of donated land acquired for the project may also be submitted as sponsor match. Please consult with your Project Officer if you have any specific questions about what may be used as a project sponsor's match.

How Do I Get Awarded a Grant?

Applicants must submit all Required Materials before the application deadline and have a sufficient Priority Rating System (PRS) score. To be considered for a grant award, the highest scoring applications will be invited to present their project in front of the Outdoor Recreation Grants Advisory Committee (Committee). The Committee will submit their funding recommendations to the ADPHT Cabinet Secretary for review.

Application Process

Step 1: Access the Website

The Matching Grant application can be found online at www.outdoorgrants.com.

Step 2: Set Up Account on Foundant Portal

When applying for the Matching Grant online, you will be directed to the Foundant portal to create a new account or log in using your existing account.

Logon

Email Address*

Password*

Log On Create New Account

[Forgot your Password?](#)

Welcome to the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism's Office of Outdoor Recreation - Outdoor Recreation Grants Program's grant application page!

New Users: Please click on "Create New Account" to complete the registration process and create your logon credentials.

Note: ONLY Cities and Counties may apply for grant funding. If a consultant or third party is working with a City or County, the application must be submitted by the entity seeking funding. Applications may only be submitted by a third party on behalf of a City/County if the City or County seeking funds creates an account and adds the third party as a collaborator to work on the grant application. Instructions to add a collaborator can be found [here](#).

Please view the video (6 minutes long) and written (with screenshots) tutorial using [this link](#).

Existing Users: Please enter your credentials and log in. If you forgot your password, please use the "Forgot your Password?" link to the left to reset your password.

Questions: Please contact our office at ArkansasGoOutdoors@arkansas.gov

New Users

Please click on the **“Create New Account”** button to complete the registration process and create your logon credentials.

Returning Users

Please login using the email account associated with your profile.

Note: Only cities and counties may apply for grant funding. If a consultant or third party is working with the city or county, they can be added as a collaborator to work on the grant application.

There is a video tutorial about the Foundant application process by clicking on the link available on the login page of the portal.

Step 3: Submit Your Application

All applications must be submitted online by the designated application deadline as found on page 6 of this guide. Please retain a copy of your application for your reference.

Step 4: Application Review and Scoring

Application review and scoring begins immediately after the application deadline. Project Officers will review applications for deficiencies and score applications with the Priority Rating System (PRS) which can be found on page 32 of this guide. Once scoring is complete, applications will be ranked from highest to lowest scores.

Step 5: Grant Hearings

Once applications are scored, applicants will be notified via the Foundant portal indicating their score and whether their application has been selected for review by the Committee in October.

Selected applications will be presented to the Committee by the applicant’s Project Officer. Applicants whose grant applications are not selected are encouraged to reapply in the following grant cycle.

Applications will be selected for review using the PRS score.

NOTE:

The amount of funding available is based upon the State’s yearly tax receipts. Staff will not know the amount of available funding during the application cycle. Final funding amount will be determined in September.

The Application Process



Applicants invited to the Grant Hearings will each be given eight (8) minutes to present their proposal to the Committee. This presentation may take the form of a slide show, video, or persuasive speech. However, applicants wishing to use additional materials must produce and provide all materials necessary for their presentation.

Program staff will make every effort to ensure electronic media are presented without a hitch. However, staff is not responsible for technical difficulties that may occur on the day of the hearing. Applicants should be prepared to speak about their project proposal in the event of equipment malfunction. Backup material or handouts will be allowed.

Presentation materials should be appropriate for audiences of all ages. Religious and political themes should be avoided, as projects funded by the Program are intended for use by all members of the community regardless of creed. Do not use animals or human beings as props for, or participants in, any physical presentation. This includes bringing members of potential user groups, such as children or athletic teams, into the hearing space. Electronic presentations may feature specific user groups, but applicants should refrain from overt emotional manipulation. Violation of these rules may result in disqualification of the applicant's proposal. The Program Director will have final approval of all proposed presentations.

Any representative of the applicant may appear before the Committee. The Chief Executive Officer is encouraged (but not required) to be present to answer any questions regarding funding/maintenance.

Step 6: Committee Review & Recommendations

The Committee will review applications based on the information submitted and will make funding recommendations to the Cabinet Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism for their approval. Project Officers may not, and do not, advocate for individual projects. Staff do not have the authority to release the Committee's recommendations to the public prior to review by the Cabinet Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism.

Step 7: Grant Award Announcements

Applicants will receive the results of the hearing through the Foundant portal as soon as recommendations are approved and certified.

Important Dates to Remember

May 1, 2025	Grant applications available on the website
August 29, 2025	APPLICATION DEADLINE
October 29-31, 2025	Grant Hearings

Application Materials

The following are brief explanations of what is required for an application to be eligible, and what is optional to earn Priority Rating System (PRS) points. Detailed instructions are listed under each category. Each applicant must submit all items that fall under the title “Required Materials”.

Required for Land Acquisition

If your application includes obtaining land for public outdoor recreation, you are required to submit several materials in addition to the Required Materials. Not all forms of land acquisition will require the same documents. It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** that you consult with your Project Officer immediately if your project involves land acquisition. See **pages 22-23** for details regarding land acquisition.

Priority Rating System Checklist

In the event total requested funding exceeds twice the amount of available funding, the Priority Rating System (PRS) determines which applicants will be invited to the Grant Hearings to present their project to the Committee, so these optional PRS points are very important! The more points you score on the PRS, the better your chance of being invited to appear before the Committee for funding consideration.

Application Checklist

Required Materials Checklist

- _____ 1) Estimated Project Cost
- _____ 2) SCORP Priority Assessment
- _____ 3) Fund Source Assurance
- _____ 4) Resolution
- _____ 5) Proof of Land Control
- _____ 6) Site Location Map
- _____ 7) Site Plan
- _____ 8) Project Boundary Map

Required for Land Acquisition

- _____ 1) Letter of Intent to Sell or Donate
- _____ 2) Deed of Proposed Acquisition
- _____ 3) Commitment for Title Insurance
- _____ 4) Plan for delayed development

Priority Rating System Checklist

- _____ 1) Community Outreach
- _____ 2) Public Meeting
- _____ 3) Parks Committee
- _____ 4) Improved Barrier Free Access

OR

- _____ 5) Improved Play Equipment
- _____ 6) Fund Source Assurance
- _____ 7) Letter from Licensed Design Professional
- _____ 8) Site Plan
- _____ 9) Grant History
- _____ 10) Open Projects

Required Materials

1. Estimated Project Cost

Development Costs

List all line items and estimated costs.

Line items should be “rounded up” to an appropriate number to include installation, freight, tax, or contingency costs. It is okay to overestimate development costs.

If a line item, such as concrete, will be in more than one park, please separate the costs for each park and write the costs on separate lines.

Acquisition Method

If applicable, select the type of acquisition and list the property’s estimated value.

NOTE: Applicants are not recommended to purchase a formal appraisal during the application process.

Optional Costs

Administrative fees cannot exceed 10% of the total development costs.

Landscape architectural, architectural, and/or engineering fees cannot exceed 12% of the total development costs.

NOTE: Administration, landscape architecture, engineering, and architecture fees may only be reimbursed after commensurate development work has been completed.

List Your Line Items in Priority Order Indicate which line items should be prioritized in the event an application receives partial funding.

2. SCORP Priority Assessment (page 25)

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor

Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a 5-year road map for improving public outdoor recreation in Arkansas. The SCORP was produced through research and a large-scale survey of Arkansas citizens and recreation providers (e.g., local park directors) in the state. The SCORP Priorities reflect the survey, and provide an idea of what kinds of projects the people of Arkansas would like to see in their communities.

Applicants are encouraged to describe the way(s) in which their project meets one or more of the SCORP Priorities. Project Officers will read all responses and relay this information to the Committee. Points in this category are only relevant to applicants who are invited to the Grant Hearings. The Committee may consider SCORP responses when making recommendations for funding.

See pages 25-30 for more information on SCORP priorities.

Required Materials

3. Fund Source Assurance

Categorize the source(s) of project funding that will pay for the line items on the Estimated Project Cost form.

4. City Council/Quorum Court Resolution (page 13)

A resolution documenting support of the grant application. The resolution must be from the current year and include the wording found on page 13.

5. Proof of Land Control (See page 10)

Deed

Required when the applicant already has ownership of the park to be developed.

Generally, reversionary clauses or any other clouds in a land title that are inconsistent with public outdoor recreational use are not allowed. Additional Deeds may be requested by Project Officer after application submission.

Letter of Intent to Sell or Donate

Required if the application is to acquire land through fee-simple purchase and/or private donation.

Lease

Leased lands from state or federal agencies are the only leases eligible for grant funding. Submit a copy of the lease (or other formal land use agreement) with the application.

6. Site Location Map (see page 16)

A map that clearly shows:

1. Extent of the applicant's city/community
2. Location of the proposed project
3. Location of land acquisition (if applicable)

7. Site Plan (see page 17)

A site plan of the proposed project area. A site plan is required with your application.

Site Plan

Worth points on PRS.

Must clearly show:

1. Proportionally accurate project area
2. All application line items
3. Existing facilities near the project area
4. Barrier-free access to all proposed facilities. Identify handicapped parking, paved walkways, ramps, bridges, etc.

8. Project Boundary Map (see page 18)

A map clearly showing the boundary lines of the proposed project area.

If the proposed project will be in an existing park, the entire park should be included within the boundary map. If you feel the entire park cannot be included, **consult your project officer before the deadline.**

An example of a boundary map may be found on page 18.

NOTE: Everything located within the defined boundary must remain in outdoor recreation use in perpetuity.

NOTE: Project Boundary Map and Site Plan may be combined if the boundary lines, proposed site elements, and existing site elements of the park are clearly identified.

Land Acquisition

1. Letter of Intent to Sell or Donate

Required if the application is to acquire land through fee-simple purchase and/or private donation. The letter must come from the property owner and include the following:

1. Statement of intention to sell and/or donate
2. Legal description of property
3. Price of purchase (if applicable)
4. Signature from both parties

2. Deed of Proposed Acquisition

Please include a copy of the deed for the land you intend to acquire.

3. Commitment for Title Insurance

Only required if the land to be acquired does not come with a warranty deed. If this is the case, the application must include a letter addressed to the ORGP Director with a statement of intention to purchase title insurance upon grant award and must be signed by the applicant's CEO.

4. Plan for Delayed Development

If the application is to acquire land for delayed development, it is helpful to provide a plan for that development. Future development of a site is not required for the proposal to be eligible, although any site acquired must be accessible (include barrier-free access) or made so upon acquisition. A good plan will include:

1. Site plan showing:
 - a. Future facilities and site elements
 - b. Provisions for public access if a conservation project
2. Interim plans for the site
 - a. Current use(s) of the site
 - b. How the site can be used by the public until it is developed

Instructions - Priority Rating System

The Priority Rating System (PRS) is used to score Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant applications. The following items are not required, but completion of this section can be consequential to your application's success. Application scores will not be amended after the application deadline.

1. Community Involvement

Applicant met one or more of the community involvement requirements listed in Appendix A (page 19).

2. Public Meeting

Applicant met the public meeting requirements listed in Appendix C (page 21).

3. Parks Committee (Independent)

Applicants who have an active parks committee **that meets and acts independently, and is not a part of the City Council/Quorum Court** may receive up to three (3) points on the PRS if they provide the following in their application:
List of Committee Members

If your city has a parks committee, please list the names of the appointed individuals and their terms of office. Please indicate if the individuals do not have terms of office.

Minutes of Park Committee Meetings

Include the minutes from committee meetings that have occurred within the past 12 months.

Parks Subcommittee

Applicant who do not have an independent parks committee but do have an active City Council/Quorum Court parks subcommittee may earn up to two (2) PRS points by submitting the names of subcommittee members, their terms of office, and minutes of subcommittee discussions that have occurred in the last 12 months.

4. Improved Barrier Free Access

Application will construct barrier free access to existing facilities within one or more parks.
Example: Constructing a new accessible path to an existing facility or modifying an existing facility to meet accessibility standards. Applicants will also receive points if all existing parks within their jurisdiction already meet the barrier free standard listed above.

5. Improved Play Equipment

Application will improve existing play equipment by meeting CPSC and/or ADA safety standards. Examples of this include:

1. Installing compliant impact surfacing
2. Replacing non-compliant play equipment

CPSC= Consumer Product Safety Commission
ADA= Americans with Disabilities Act

6. Fund Source Assurance

Project Officers will review the Fund Source Assurance form and assign PRS points based on if the project's funding is:

- 1) All cash value
- 2) Combination of cash value and promised donations

Projects with all cash value will be prioritized.

Instructions - Priority Rating System

7. Use of Licensed Professional

Applicants provided a letter signed by their Chief Executive Officer committing to the use of a licensed professional. A licensed design professional can be a landscape-architect, architect, engineer, or a licensed tradesman such as a plumber or electrician. All licensed professionals must be registered in the state of Arkansas.

8. Site Plan

Site plan(s) that include and identify the following will receive points on the PRS:

1. Proportionally accurate project area
2. All application line items
3. Existing facilities near the project area
4. Barrier-free access to all proposed facilities including ADA parking and walkway(s). If access to proposed facilities already exists, indicate the existing ADA parking and pathway(s) that will provide access to proposed facilities.

9. Grant History

Determined by the last time the applicant was awarded a Matching or FUN Park grant from this program. State fiscal years are used as a determining factor.

Please contact your Project Officer if this information is unknown.

10. Open Projects

Determined by the status of previous Matching Grants at the time of the application's submittal.

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

Resolution No. 12-3456

WHEREAS, SAMPLEVILLE, Arkansas seeks to improve the recreation facilities and wishes to seek grant funding assistance; and

WHEREAS, in order to obtain the funds necessary to develop and/or improve the site for such a recreation area, it is necessary to obtain an Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant from the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism; and

WHEREAS, the plans for such recreation areas have been prepared and the price therefore has been established; and

WHEREAS, this governing body understands the grantee and grantor will enter into a binding agreement which obligates both parties to policies and procedures contained within the Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant Application Guide, including, but not limited to, the following; the park area defined by the project boundary map, submitted with the application, must remain in outdoor recreation use in perpetuity, regardless if the property is bought or developed with matching grant funds and; all future overhead utility lines within the project boundary must be placed underground and; the project area must remain open and available for use by the public at all reasonable times of the day and year; facilities can be reserved for special events, league play, etc. but cannot be reserved, leased or assigned for exclusive use, and; the project area must be kept clean, maintained, and operated in a safe and healthful manner.

City Council/Quorum Court is well aware and apprised of the above-mentioned project, and will provide the local portion of the development cost of the entire project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council/Quorum Court of SAMPLEVILLE, Arkansas that the Mayor/County judge is hereby authorized to make application to the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism for assistance to develop recreational facilities for the City/County.

Passed this 1st day of July, 2099.

APPROVED _____
Mayor/County Judge Clerk

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

June 30, 2099

I am hereby submitting this letter confirming this grant proposal was a dedicated agenda item at the June 7, 2099 monthly meeting of the **City of Sampleville City Council / Sampleville County Quorum Court**. I also certify that the meeting was open to the public, was advertised in advance of the meeting, and that the grant proposal was explicitly noted in the advertisement, the method of which was as follows:

METHODS OF ADVERTISEMENT: Posted Notices

LOCATION: Sampleville Hardware Store, Sampleville Post Office, Sampleville Grocery Store

DATE: Posted on May 30, 2099

A copy of the official meeting agenda is included with this application. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at (123) 456-7890.

Sincerely,

Mayor/County Judge signature

Mayor/County Judge name

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

June 30, 2099

I am hereby submitting this letter confirming the **City of Sampleville** completed a volunteer activity pursuant to this grant application.

TYPE OF ACTIVITY: **Trash Pickup**

LOCATION: **Sampleville City Park, 1234 Parks Rd., Sampleville, AR 77777**

DATE: **June 27th, 2099**

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: **9**

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at **(123) 456-7890**.

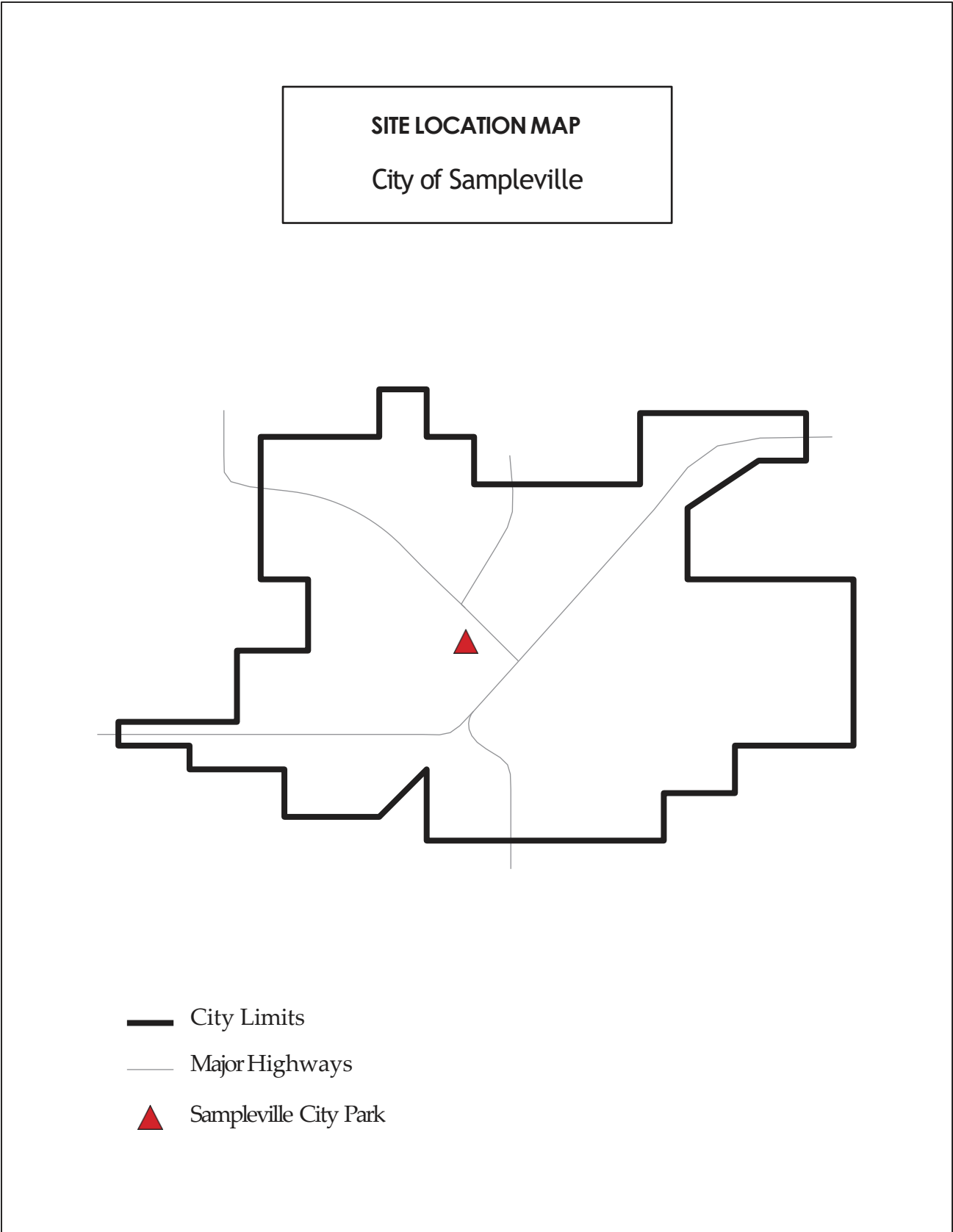
Sincerely,

Mayor/County Judge signature

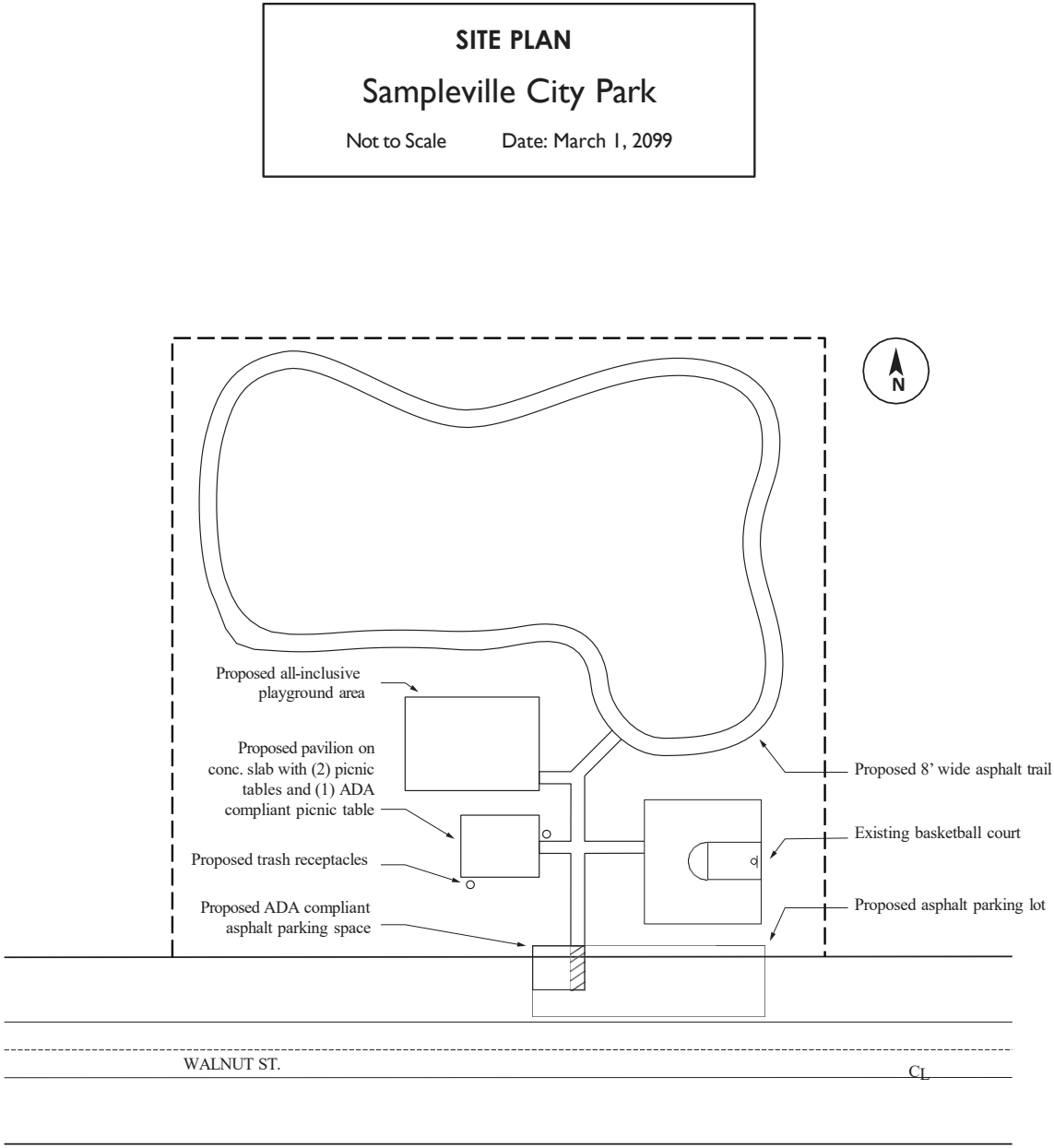
Mayor/County Judge name

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

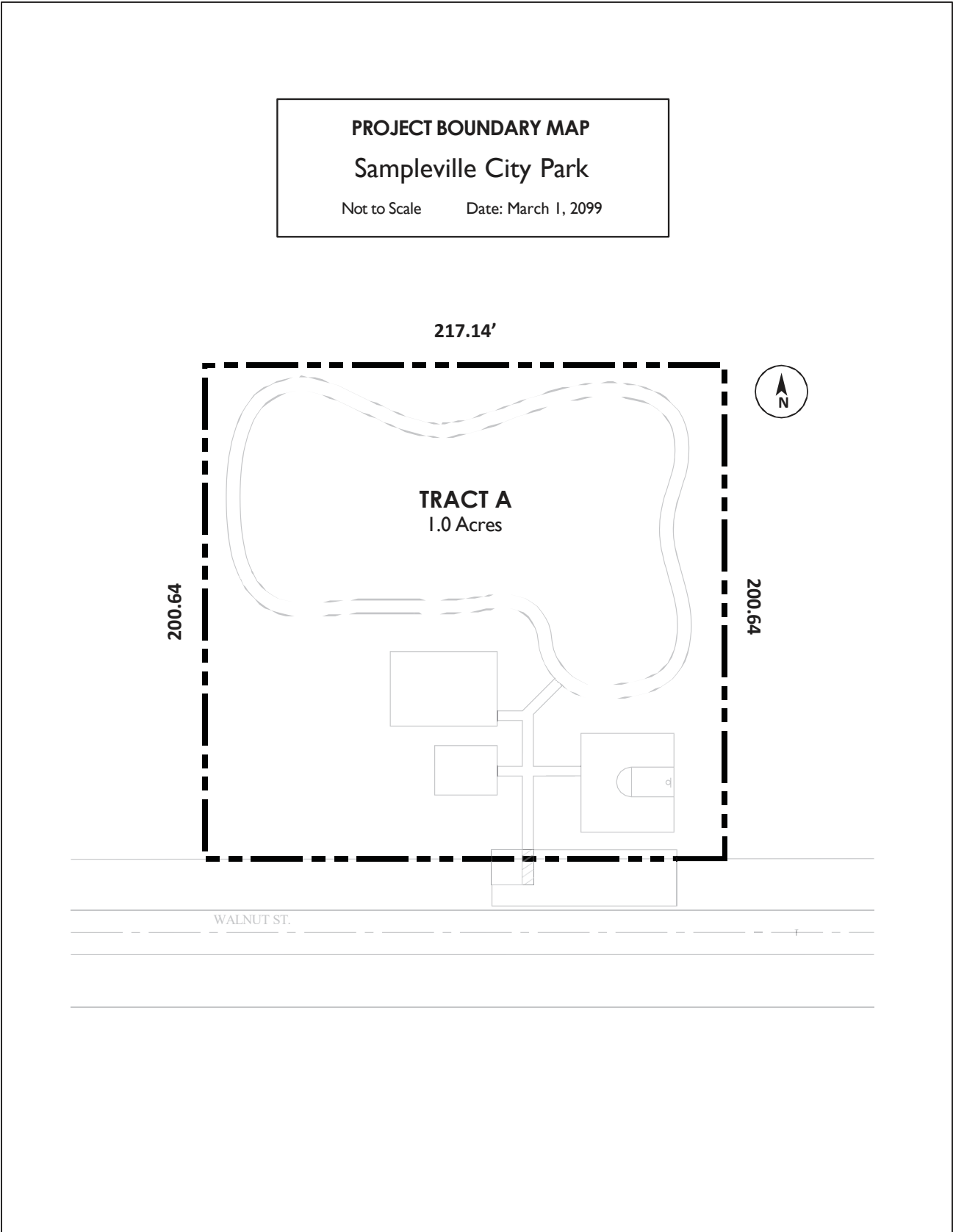


EXAMPLE



EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE



EXAMPLE

Appendix A

Community Outreach

Applicants are strongly encouraged to conduct community outreach prior to their mandatory public meeting. Outreach may include in-person meetings, scheduled visits, posts on social media, or by appearing on a radio or television broadcast. To qualify as community outreach, efforts must ask for public comment on something related to the proposed project. **Advertising the public meeting does not count as community outreach.**

This activity encourages applicants to engage with special interest groups and under-served persons in your community who may not attend a public meeting. Outreach efforts should be structured in a way that the applicant can reasonably expect to receive the greatest involvement within their community.

Applicants will receive points on the Priority Rating System (PRS) for completing outreach activities. Only traditional in-person meetings can be held multiple times for multiple points. Partial points will be given to outreach efforts that do not meet one or more of the requirements listed below.

In-Person Meetings (Ethnic/racial minority groups, persons with special needs, senior citizens, school children, etc.)

1. Name of group contacted
2. Date of contact or meeting
3. Sign-in sheet and/or meeting minutes (including written responses, if any)

Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc)

Screenshot(s) containing:

1. Name of organization
2. Date posted
3. Content of post
4. Comments and responses, if any

Reminder: Multiple efforts in the social media category will only count as one activity

Media Broadcast (Radio or Television)

Written statement from applicant's CEO certifying:

1. Type of media broadcast
2. Name of broadcasting organization
3. Summary of what was discussed

Reminder: Multiple efforts in the media broadcast category will only count as one activity

Appendix B

Volunteer Activity Standards

NOTES ON SCORING

The Volunteer Activity is included in the "Community Outreach" section of the Priority Rating System (PRS). You may conduct as many volunteer activities as you wish, but **only one activity will be counted towards the PRS score**. A fully-documented Volunteer Activity conducted after January 1st, (year of the application due date) that is included with the application will receive two (2) points. An activity documented incompletely will receive one (1) point.

What is a Volunteer Activity?

Volunteer activities can take on many forms, and just about any organized volunteer workday in the park will be accepted, such as trash pick-up, painting, equipment repair, tree-planting, etc.

Does it have to be in the park for which the application is submitted?

Yes.

What if we are applying for our first park?

No problem! If you don't have a park, you could have the activity on the site you are proposing. (Even empty sites could use a spruce-up now and again!) If holding an activity in the proposed site isn't feasible, another volunteer activity that takes place outdoors within the community will be accepted.

Is there a minimum number of participants?

The more the merrier, of course, but as long as there is more than one person, the activity will be acceptable. No distinction will be made on the PRS between large and small groups.

Documenting the Volunteer Activity

To receive points for the volunteer activity, applications must include the following:

1. Location of the activity
2. Date of the activity
3. Type of activity
4. Number of participants (approximate)
5. Sign-in sheet
6. Signature of sponsor Chief Executive

All requirements for activity documentation may be met by using the template found on page 15.

Appendix C

Public Meeting Standards

What is a Public Meeting?

"Public Meeting" refers to the regularly-scheduled monthly meeting of the project sponsor's governing body (City Council or Quorum Court). For the purposes of this application, the meeting must be held during the same calendar year (i.e., after January 1st) that the application is due.

Discussing the Project in the Public Meeting

In order to receive points for holding a public meeting, the proposed project (or proposal to submit a grant application) must be listed as a separate agenda item for that month's meeting. Additionally, the meeting must be advertised as open to the public. Applicants may use the advertising method normally used to publicize the monthly meeting.

Documenting the Public Meeting

Applications must include the following:

1. Copy of the meeting agenda
2. Sign-in sheets
3. Minutes
4. Proof of meeting advertisement that includes:
 - i. **Method of advertisement**
 - ii. **Date of publication**

Method of advertisement may be documented by providing a copy of the advertisement itself, e.g., printing a screenshot of the advertisement from the sponsor's official web page or social media account. If date of publication (such as a time stamp) is not clearly visible, indicate the date in some other way, such as writing it by hand on the document.

The sponsor's Chief Executive (Mayor / City Manager / County Judge) may produce a **signed** document (see page 14) articulating and affirming 4(i) and 4(ii) above. Applications utilizing signed Chief Executive statement as proof of advertisement **must still include a copy of the meeting agenda.**

Appendix D

Land Acquisition Information

Applicants may apply for a grant to acquire lands and waters to establish a new park, expand an existing park, establish a conservation area, or acquire any other property dedicated to outdoor recreation. Land may be acquired through fee-simple purchase or private donation. Please contact your project officer as soon as possible if you are planning to acquire property.

There are three types of acquisition projects:

Acquisition for immediate development means the applicant intends to construct outdoor recreation facilities as soon as the property has been purchased.

Acquisition for delayed development means the applicant will purchase land with the intention of constructing outdoor recreation facilities in the future. During the period of time between acquisition and development, the property must be open for public recreation purposes to the extent to which the land is suitable or which can be achieved with a minimum public investment. Non-recreational uses, such as farming, that occurs on the property at the time of acquisition must cease prior to a grantee's request for reimbursement.

Acquisition for preservation/protection means the applicant intends to purchase land primarily for conservation or educational purposes. Projects in this category must install provisions for public access that meet accessibility standards.

Guidelines for Land Acquisition

1. Donated property must be in private ownership, not public ownership, at the time of acquisition.
2. Generally, reversionary clauses or any other clouds in a land title that are inconsistent with public outdoor recreational use are not allowed.
3. Title to the land should not be taken until a state contract authorizing Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant funding for the acquisition is completed, unless applicant has received prior approval from ADPHT.
4. The appraised value of property may be used as a portion or all of the project sponsor's match. Successful applicants will be required to submit either a finding of value or formal appraisal after grant approval.

NOTE: Applicants are not recommended to purchase an appraisal prior to receiving a grant award.

Finding of Value

For property with an anticipated value of \$25,000 or less, a written finding of value prepared by a knowledgeable person such as a real estate broker, banker, or local appraiser can be provided. This document should include a statement of the preparer's experience, qualifications, a short description of the factors considered, and the means by which a conclusion was reached. The written finding of value can be submitted after grant award.

Formal Appraisal

For property with an anticipated value of \$25,000 or more, a formal appraisal must be purchased after the grant is awarded. The appraisal must comply with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) <http://www.uspap.org>.

1. If acquiring land for any purpose, applicants are required to submit a letter of intent to sell or a letter of intent to donate from the property owner (see page 10).
2. If acquiring land without a warranty deed, applicants are required to submit a letter of commitment for title insurance.
3. If acquiring land for delayed development, Applicants are required to submit a plan for delayed development.

Appendix E

Matching Grant Requirements

If you receive an Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant, you must adhere to the following requirements:

1. Applicants should not begin construction or take title of land until a state contract between the State and sponsor is completed, unless applicant has otherwise requested and received approval from ADPHT.
2. Project sponsors must identify the boundaries of their public park project. Once the boundaries have been identified by the local project sponsor and provided to the Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism, all facilities constructed within that boundary, at any future time, must be in compliance with the provisions contained within this guide.
3. Property acquired or developed with grant funds must be retained for nothing other than public outdoor recreation use in perpetuity. Property that has been converted to any private and/or non-outdoor recreation use must be replaced by the project sponsor with lands of equal or greater real estate value and recreation usefulness.
4. Site inspections will be made by Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism staff periodically during construction and at least once every five years after the project's completion. Project sponsors who fail to maintain the grant-assisted site for public use may jeopardize future eligibility for Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant funds.
5. Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant-funded facilities must be accessible to persons with physical impairments.
6. All funded projects must be open to entry and use by all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Discrimination on the basis of residence, including preferential reservation or membership systems, is prohibited, except to the extent that reasonable differences in admission and other fees may be maintained on the basis of residence.
7. Property acquired or developed with Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant funding assistance shall be maintained so as to be safe and accessible to the public. Site improvements shall be kept in reasonable repair.
8. The property shall be kept open for public use at reasonable hours and times of the year, according to the type of area or facility.
9. Participants may impose reasonable limits on the type and extent of use of areas and facilities acquired or developed with Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant assistance when such a limitation is necessary for maintenance or preservation. Limitations may be imposed on the type of users (e.g. hunters, four-wheelers, etc.).
10. Overhead utility lines are discouraged within the project boundary. All future overhead lines must be placed underground if possible. This applies to any overhead lines including electric lines, phone lines, etc. The cost of burying overhead lines may be included in an Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant application.
11. Administration, landscape architecture, engineering, and architecture fees may only be reimbursed after commensurate development work has been completed.
12. A permanent sign indicating that Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant funds were used to acquire and/or develop public outdoor recreation facilities must be maintained within the park. The Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism will provide the grantee a small sign to be mounted in a prominent location within the park.

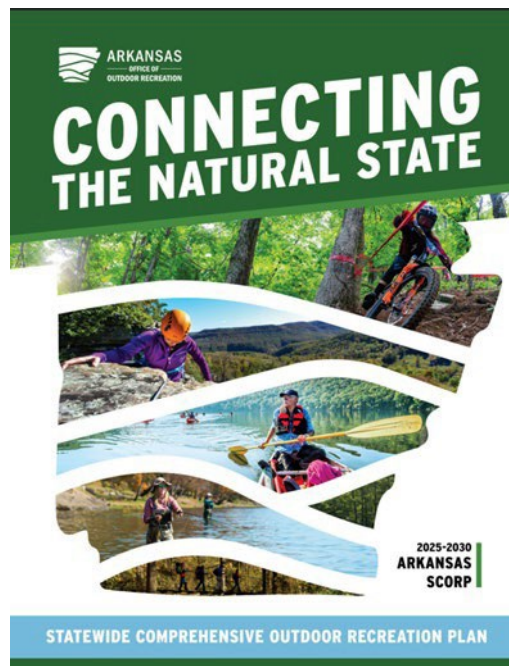
Appendix F

SCORP Priorities

The *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)* is prepared every five years by the staff of the Outdoor Recreation Grants Program. The purpose of the plan is to assess state outdoor recreation facilities and resources, and to make recommendations and prioritize areas that need attention in the future. In order for your project to be funded, it must fit within one or more of the Priorities listed on the following page. The Priorities are listed on pages 10-15 in the SCORP document, which is located on our website.

The Arkansas Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan sets forth these Priorities for the period of 2025 through 2030. Through consideration of key issues, public interest, natural resources, and existing facilities and management, leaders in the field of recreation see these Priorities as having the potential to build better and holistic outdoor recreation in the future.

The nature of a statewide plan inherently involves many stakeholders, with varying missions, resources, and public needs to serve. The overall status of outdoor recreation will be improved in a holistic way when each agency, municipality, or other stakeholder can make use of the SCORP and its Priorities to strengthen their work in developing and maintaining parks for public use.



Priority 1: Sustain Community Investment

Arkansas' outdoor recreation industry is a significant economic driver for the state, generating billions of dollars in revenue and supporting tens of thousands of jobs. The state's natural beauty, diverse landscapes, and abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities make it a popular destination for tourists and residents alike. Building access to the outdoors through infrastructure investments benefits the outdoor industry and helps grow this sector of our state's economy.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis' most recent report, outdoor recreation in Arkansas generates more than \$4.5 billion in economic activity and supports roughly 41,000 jobs. This represents 2.2% of the state's gross domestic product (GDP).

Examples of outdoor recreation opportunities benefitting local economies:

- The Razorback Greenway is a 40-mile multi-use trail connecting communities in Northwest Arkansas. The trail has been credited with boosting property values and increasing business activity in these communities along its route.
- The Buffalo National River is a popular destination for canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. The river generates over \$100 million in economic activity each year and supports over 1,000 jobs.
- Hot Springs National Park is a world-renowned destination for its natural hot springs. The park generates over \$200 million in economic activity each year and supports over 2,000 jobs.

The future of outdoor recreation investment in Arkansas:

- The outdoor recreation industry is expected to continue to grow in Arkansas in the coming years. The state is making investments in its outdoor recreation infrastructure and in business resources for the industry. This growth and investment is expected to create new jobs and generate additional revenue for the state.
- The state's investment in the Delta Heritage Trail, an 85-mile gravel bike rail-to-trail project, not only preserves the rich history of the Delta region but also creates opportunities for tourism and economic development. Through collaborative efforts between local communities, government agencies, and conservation organizations, the Delta Heritage Trail project exemplifies Arkansas' dedication to building a sustainable and vibrant future for all.

- In 2023, Governor Sanders created the Natural State Initiative to further establish Arkansas as a leader in the outdoor economy and a destination for outdoor enthusiasts from around the world. The advisory council published a list of recommendations including:
 - Educate Arkansans to the personal and economic benefits of a thriving outdoor economy.
 - Promote careers in outdoor recreation, tourism, and hospitality.
 - Provide greater investment in and support to those engaged in Arkansas' outdoor economy.
- The University of Arkansas has invested in the Greenhouse Outdoor Recreation Program (GORP), a business incubator focused on the development of entrepreneurs who are creating innovative products and services within the outdoor recreation industry.

Our parks, trails, and other recreational amenities serve as magnets, drawing people to live, work, and play in our communities. To accurately gauge the impact of these recreational resources on our communities, recreation leaders require robust economic data to effectively communicate with key stakeholders. In 2025, the Office of Outdoor Recreation will conclude a statewide outdoor recreation economic impact study that will provide valuable data and insights for this purpose.

The financial gains and clear positive returns from investments in outdoor recreation infrastructure underscore the importance of maintaining funding for these activities. In the face of budget constraints, it becomes crucial to substantiate the economic value of allocating funds to parks and outdoor recreation amenities. Sustaining investment requires effective communication with decision-makers and citizens alike. To advocate for the value of outdoor recreation, both socially and economically, enhanced data and outreach efforts to local officials and leaders are essential. By emphasizing the return on investment, recreation providers can demonstrate that these funds are well-spent and yield significant societal and economic benefits.

Recreation providers should leverage state and federal grant opportunities, like the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) managed by the Arkansas Department of Transportation, for infrastructure investments.

Priority 2: Improve Accessibility to Outdoor Recreation

All recreation providers strive for inclusivity, ensuring that their parks are welcoming to all users. No reputable provider would intentionally exclude any individual or user group from enjoying communal spaces. Consequently, it might appear unnecessary to designate Improve Accessibility to Outdoor Recreation as a SCORP Priority. However, based on survey responses, we believe this Priority holds significant importance.

Access extends beyond measures like sidewalks and wheelchair ramps, which serve to make previously inaccessible areas accessible. While it's true that many parks could benefit from upgrades for wheelchair access, there are demographics beyond the physically impaired that face barriers to outdoor recreation. This priority encourages providers to deeply assess their communities and honestly evaluate the services offered by their public spaces and facilities.

Improving accessibility to outdoor recreation involves implementing various measures to ensure that individuals of all abilities can fully participate and enjoy outdoor activities. Below are ways to enhance accessibility:

Infrastructure Improvements:

- Install wheelchair-accessible ramps, paths, and trails to provide easy entry and navigation for individuals with mobility impairments.
- Construct accessible parking spaces and restroom facilities near recreational areas to accommodate individuals with disabilities.
- Incorporate tactile paving, signage with braille, and audible signals to assist individuals with visual impairments in navigating outdoor spaces.

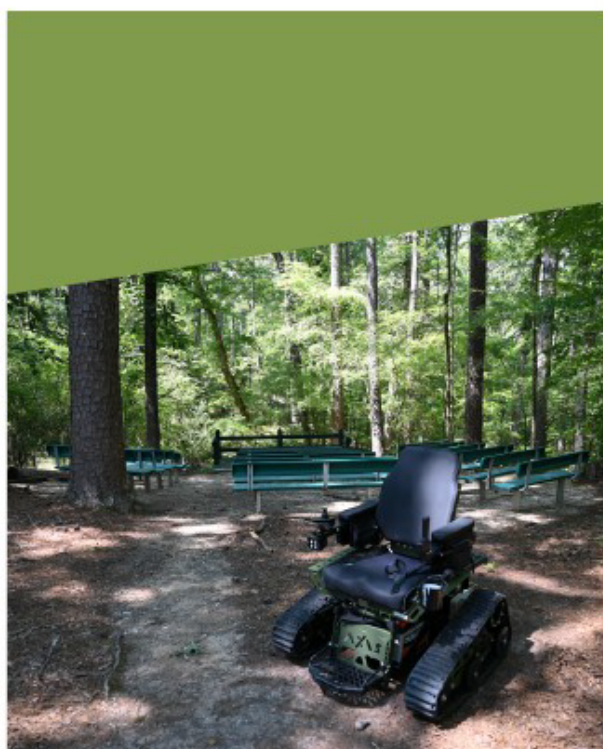
Adaptive Equipment and Facilities:

- Provide adaptive equipment such as all-terrain wheelchairs, handcycles, and adaptive kayaks to enable individuals with disabilities to engage in many types of outdoor activities.
- Establish adaptive sports programs and inclusive recreational events that cater to individuals with diverse abilities, fostering participation and community integration.

Education and Training:

- Offer training programs and resources to outdoor recreation staff and volunteers on disability awareness, inclusive practices, and proper assistance techniques.
- Provide information and guidance to visitors with disabilities on accessible trails, amenities, and activities available in outdoor recreation areas.

In 2024, the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission and the Arkansas State Parks partnered on an initiative to make the outdoors more accessible to all Arkansans by creating a new adaptive recreation program to increase outdoor opportunities and awareness for mobility-impaired individuals. Electric wheelchairs, equipped with rubberized tracks to allow the user to overcome many types of terrain, were purchased for use, providing greater access to hunting, shooting, angling, traversing the trails and wildlife-watching opportunities for mobility-impaired individuals.



Priority 3: Foster Outdoor Innovation

In the modern age, technology has become an integral part of our daily lives, permeating every aspect, including outdoor recreation. Leveraging technology can revolutionize outdoor experiences, making them more accessible, engaging, and informative. This priority explores various technological innovations and initiatives aimed at enhancing outdoor recreation, fostering innovation, and creating memorable experiences for enthusiasts of all ages.

Incorporating Technology for Outdoor Recreation:

Mobile Applications:

Mobile apps offer a plethora of functionalities, from trail maps and GPS navigation to weather forecasts and safety alerts. Incorporating features such as user-generated reviews and real-time updates can significantly enhance the outdoor experience.

Recommendations:

Collaborate with local outdoor organizations and developers to create comprehensive, user-centric apps that facilitate connectivity among users. Incorporate features such as social sharing, community forums, and event calendars to foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie.

Interactive Map Concept:

The WY Wonder Map concept, inspired by Wyoming's outdoor recreational opportunities, utilizes interactive mapping technology to showcase various attractions, trails, and amenities.

Recommendations:

Expand the concept to encompass the state of Arkansas, fostering collaboration among state agencies, conservation groups, and technology companies. Integrate features like live updates, user-generated content, and crowd-sourced recommendations to foster dynamic engagement and community collaboration.

Outdoor Recreation Rural Toolkit (ORR):

The ORR toolkit provides resources and guidelines for rural communities to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, leveraging technology and innovative design principles.

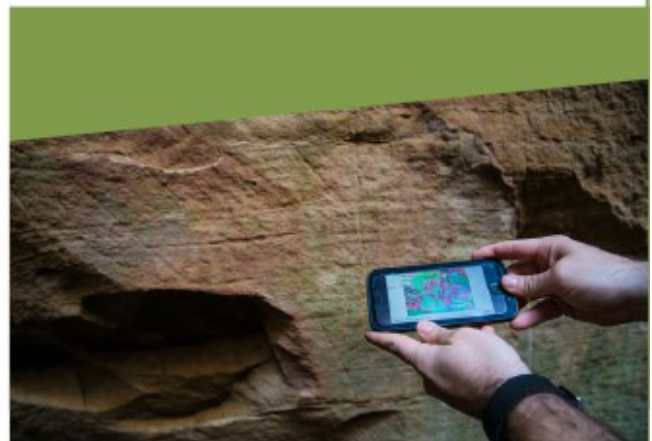
Recommendations:

Utilize the toolkit and incorporate emerging technologies and best practices. Offer training and support to help communities implement technology-driven solutions effectively.

The SCORP serves as a framework for strategic planning and development of outdoor recreation resources. By integrating tech into SCORP initiatives, innovative solutions can be realized.

Incorporating technology into outdoor recreation initiatives offers immense potential to cultivate connectivity and enhance experiences for individuals and communities. By leveraging mobile applications and innovative design principles, stakeholders can foster deeper connections with nature, promote community engagement, and inspire stewardship of outdoor resources. Technology also impacts the outdoor industry by enhancing user experiences, expanding accessibility, creating business opportunities, and helping it evolve to meet the demand for more personalized and responsible outdoor experiences.

Embracing the ethos of innovative connectivity ensures that outdoor spaces remain accessible, inclusive, and cherished for generations to come.



Priority 4: Support Public Wellness

Outdoor recreation plays a vital role in promoting health and wellness among residents of Arkansas. The state's diverse outdoor recreation facilities, settings, and programs contribute to healthy behaviors in several ways. Firstly, they offer opportunities for physical activity, helping to combat obesity and reduce the incidence of chronic diseases. Secondly, outdoor recreation activities can enhance mental health by connecting individuals with natural environments, which can alleviate stress and improve interpersonal relationships.

This connection between outdoor recreation and improved health is particularly significant in Arkansas. Arkansans report higher rates of poor physical and mental health days per year compared to the national average. In 2016, a significant portion of adults in Arkansas indicated that they engaged in minimal physical activity outside of their regular job duties.

Improving access to outdoor recreation can help address these health challenges. Recent research indicates that leisure activities, rather than work or housework, now comprise the majority of physical activity in people's lives. By offering opportunities for physical activity during leisure time, outdoor recreation services are increasingly recognized as essential components of the healthcare system in the United States.

Outdoor recreation significantly contributes to public health and wellness through its connectivity to various aspects of well-being:

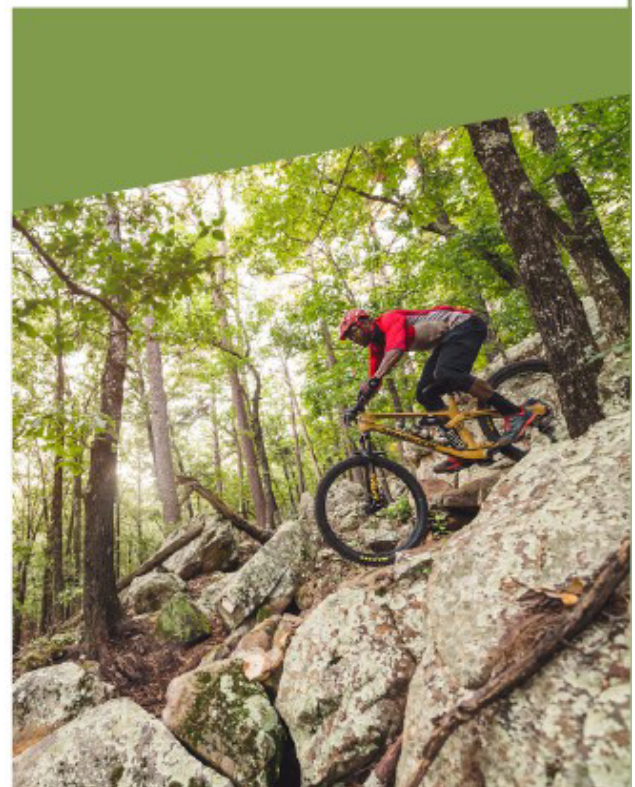
Physical Activity: Engaging in outdoor recreation activities like hiking, biking, and swimming fosters physical exercise, promoting a healthy weight, cardiovascular health, and reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

Mental Health Benefits: Spending time in natural environments during outdoor activities lowers stress levels, alleviates symptoms of anxiety and depression, and boosts mood and overall well-being. The social connections formed through outdoor recreation further enhance mental health resilience.

Stress Reduction: Natural settings have a calming effect, reducing stress and tension. Activities like nature walks and meditation in outdoor settings promote relaxation and mindfulness, supporting mental and emotional health.

Recognizing the points made above, in 2023, the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism revitalized the Great Strides Program. This grant program was created for cities to develop walking trails and associated facilities, such as accessible parking, signage, and benches, further promoting healthy active lifestyles through outdoor recreation. It is funded with a portion of Arkansas' Master Tobacco Settlement award and was also completed as a recommendation from the Natural State Initiative report.

Overall, outdoor recreation serves as a vital connector to public health and wellness, offering opportunities for physical activity, stress reduction, mental rejuvenation, and the cultivation of lifelong healthy habits. Research consistently demonstrates that increased outdoor time correlates with lower community healthcare costs. Investing in outdoor recreation infrastructure and programs strengthens the connectivity between individuals, communities, and well-being.



Priority 5: Promote Environmental Stewardship

Arkansas is known as The Natural State. Our state boasts a wealth of natural wonders, including majestic mountains, pristine forests, scenic rivers, and picturesque lakes. The state is home to several national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges, such as the Ozark National Forest, Hot Springs National Park, Buffalo National River, and the Ouachita National Forest, which offer opportunities for hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, climbing, and wildlife viewing.

The state's commitment to conservation and environmental protection has contributed to its rich biodiversity and preserved natural landscapes.

Connectivity to the outdoors plays a crucial role in promoting environmental stewardship and conservation through several key mechanisms:

Awareness and Appreciation: By fostering connections to nature, outdoor experiences increase awareness and appreciation of the environment. Spending time outdoors exposes individuals to the beauty, diversity, and fragility of natural ecosystems, leading to a greater understanding of the importance of conservation efforts.

Personal Connection: Developing personal connections to specific outdoor spaces, such as parks, trails, and wilderness areas, fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for their preservation. Individuals who have positive experiences in nature are more likely to advocate for the protection and conservation of these spaces.

Education and Interpretation: Outdoor recreation activities often include educational components and interpretive programs that inform participants about local ecosystems, wildlife, and conservation issues. Learning about the natural world enhances understanding of ecological processes.

Volunteerism and Advocacy: Connectivity to outdoor spaces inspires individuals to become involved in conservation efforts through volunteer work, advocacy, and community engagement. Outdoor enthusiasts often participate in habitat restoration projects, litter clean-ups, trail maintenance, and advocacy campaigns to protect natural areas and wildlife habitats.

Sustainable Practices: Outdoor recreation encourages the adoption of sustainable practices that minimize negative impacts on the environment. This includes principles such as Leave No Trace, which promotes responsible behavior and stewardship ethics, such as packing out trash, staying on designated trails, and minimizing disturbance to wildlife.

Economic Value: Recognizing the economic value of outdoor recreation and ecotourism can provide incentives for conservation and sustainable management of natural areas. Protecting and preserving outdoor spaces not only maintains their ecological integrity but also supports local economies through tourism and recreation-related spending.

By cultivating a sense of responsibility and appreciation for the environment, outdoor recreation contributes to the long-term protection and sustainability of our planet's natural heritage.



Appendix G

Priority Rating System

Applications are scored using a Priority Rating System (PRS) and ranked from the highest to the lowest scores. Please see page 7 of this application guide for more detailed information on how the Priority Rating System may affect your grant application.

1. Community Outreach

Documented outreach (per activity or meeting up to three meetings):

Fully Documented:	2
Fully Documented:	2
Fully Documented:	2
Insufficient Documentation:	1
No Outreach:	0
Volunteer Activity	
Fully Documented:	2
Insufficient Documentation:	1
No Volunteer:	0

2. Public Meeting

Provided required documentation including the proposed grant project was presented as a dedicated agenda item at City Council/Quorum Court monthly meeting, per instructions on page 21 of this guide.

Fully Documented	4
Insufficient Documentation	2
No public meeting	0

3. Parks Committee

Applicant has provided evidence of an active parks committee:

Yes - independent park committee	3
Yes - city council parks subcommittee	2
Incomplete documentation (either)	1
No	0

4/5. Improved Barrier Free Access and/or Play Equipment

Project involves constructing barrier free access to existing facilities within one or more parks; **or**, project will replace or upgrade play equipment with new equipment that complies with Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines; **or**, all existing parks within the applicant's jurisdiction already meet standards for barrier free access and CPSC guidelines:

Yes	2
No	0

7. Fund Source Assurance

Application's Project Fund Source Assurance reflects that the grant's match will be:

All cash value	2
Combination of cash value and promised donations	1

8. Letter From Licensed Design Professional

Provided a letter signed by the Chief Executive Officer certifying they will use a licensed design professional (i.e., landscape architect, architect or engineer) to develop construction documents and/or will use a licensed professional tradesman (i.e., contractor, electrician, etc.) to construct project facilities:

Yes	4
No	0

9. Advanced Site Plan

Application includes a site plan with a proportionally accurate project area, identifies all application line items, and identifies barrier-free access to all proposed facilities, including ADA parking and pathway(s) leading to the proposed facility. Mark ADA parking and pathway(s) providing access to any proposed facility even if ADA parking and pathway already exist:

Yes	4
Some, but not all, requirements are met	2

9/10. Grant History and Open Projects

Applicant has no open grants **and** has not received an Outdoor Recreation Grant in the past:

Never received a grant	5
21+ years	4
16-20 years	3
11-15 years	2
1-10 years	1
Open grant	0