

Matching Grant Project Management Guide

Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
Outdoor Recreation Grants Program

Revised April 2025

Introduction

The *Project Management Guide* is divided into three parts. Part 1 (pages 3-4) is titled “General Information” and describes the Matching Grant program, how it is funded, key requirements, and how the reimbursable grant works.

Part 2 (pages 5-8) is titled “Matching Grant Process” and describes the process for managing your Matching Grant from award through completion. This part also describes post-completion responsibilities.

Part 3 (pages 9-16) is titled “Reimbursement Process” and describes requirements for the Grantee to be reimbursed for project expenses. Pages 11-16 contain reimbursement forms to record city/county employees’ time records, donated labor, equipment, and donated materials. Fillable versions of these forms are available on our website, www.outdoorgrants.com.

We strongly encourage you to contact the Outdoor Recreation Grants Program if you have any questions concerning your Matching Grant. This *Project Management Guide* addresses major aspects of the Matching Grant Program but is not exhaustive.

Please direct all mailed correspondence to:
Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
Outdoor Recreation Grants Program
1 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Our email address is ArkansasGoOutdoors@arkansas.gov. Please visit our website at www.outdoorgrants.com for general information concerning our grant programs and additional resources.

General Information

Overview

Arkansas' Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant (Grant) provides financial assistance for the acquisition of land and/or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Funding for this grant is provided through a portion of the state Real Estate Transfer Tax. The Parks and Tourism Outdoor Recreation Grants Fund (A.C.A. § 19-5-1051) authorizes the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism to provide grants to cities and counties of this state for outdoor recreational purposes in accordance with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (A.C.A. § 15-12-103). These purposes include the acquisition of land as an outdoor recreational resource and the development of public outdoor recreation facilities.

Grantees should understand that certain requirements come with acceptance of their Matching Grant award. Parks developed and/or acquired with Matching Grant funds **must remain in outdoor recreational use in perpetuity** (i.e., forever). Project boundaries will be finalized once the grant is awarded and a printed map identifying those boundaries will serve as part of the Contract Agreement between the State and the Grantee.

It's important to note that the purpose of the Matching Grant Program is to promote outdoor recreation. Enclosed structures cannot be constructed within the park boundary except those that directly support outdoor recreation such as rest rooms and concession stands. Please contact your Project Officer about plans to construct any enclosed structures within the established project boundaries.

Any parks funded by the Grant must be open to the general public at all reasonable times, generally from sunrise to sunset seven days per week. Of course, there are exceptions to this such as splash pads, pools, and other facilities that are seasonal. Grantees may choose to have some recreational facilities limited to a specific use such as softball fields that will only be available for softball games or practice. However, all facilities must be available equally to every citizen for their use and enjoyment.

New utility wiring must be placed underground and Grantees are encouraged to bury existing overhead utility wiring to the greatest extent possible.

Grantees will receive a sign acknowledging Grant funding upon project completion. This sign should be placed in a prominent location on the site such as the park's entrance or parking area. Please contact our office if ever a replacement sign is needed.

Project sites will be inspected at least every five years to assure that the park does not contain any unauthorized structures, that facilities are accessible to the general public, and that the park is being maintained in a safe and healthful condition. Sponsors will be notified of any deficiencies and will become ineligible to receive future grant funds until the deficiencies are corrected.

This is a reimbursable grant where the Grantee will finance 100% of project costs and be reimbursed for one half of all eligible expenses up to the grant amount. Reimbursable costs can include force account labor, in-kind labor, or donated labor, contributions, and appropriations.

How Do Reimbursements Work?

Grantees can be reimbursed up to 50% of the total project cost for reimbursement requests that include all invoices and cancelled checks of eligible cash expenditures (cash expenditures include force account labor). The Grantee may choose between partial reimbursements throughout the project period or full reimbursement upon the project's completion. See Part 3 for more details on how to submit a reimbursement request.

The chart seen below is meant to help Grantees visualize the difference between paying cash and using donations. The following scenario is a Grantee who has received a \$50,000 grant for a \$100,000 total project cost.

All Cash Value:

The Grantee spent \$100,000 cash and \$0 in donations.
The Grantee will be reimbursed \$50,000.

More Cash Than Donated:

The Grantee spent \$75,000 cash and local citizens donated \$25,000 worth of labor and/or materials.
The Grantee will be reimbursed \$50,000.

Equal Cash and Donated:

The Grantee spent \$50,000 cash and local citizens donated \$50,000 worth of labor and/or materials.
The Grantee will be reimbursed \$50,000.

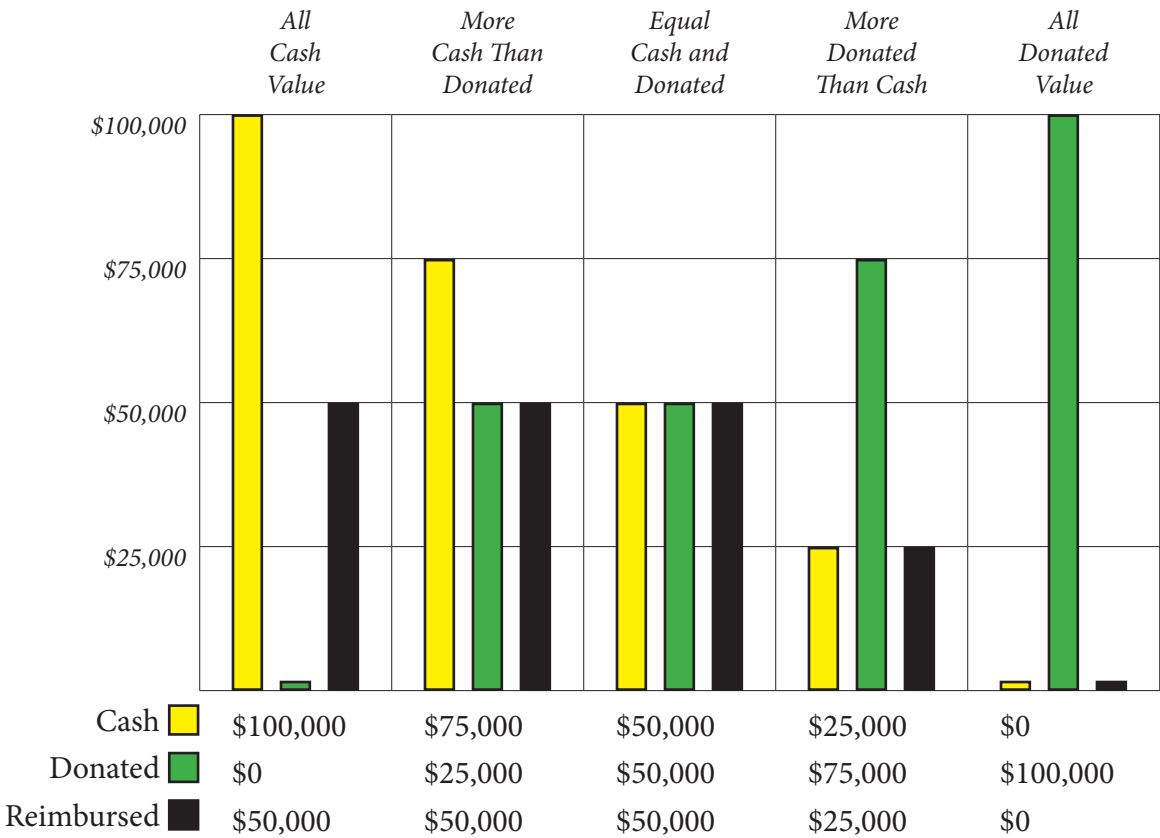
More Donated Than Cash:

The Grantee spent \$25,000 cash and local citizens donated \$75,000 worth of labor and/or materials.
The Grantee will be reimbursed \$25,000.

Note: Donations cannot exceed 50% of the grant's total project cost. In other words, the Grantee cannot be reimbursed for cash it did not spend.

All Donated:

The Grantee spent \$0 cash and local citizens donated \$100,000 worth of labor and/or materials.
The Grantee will be reimbursed \$0.
The park could have been built without a grant!



Matching Grant Process

Do not solicit bids, contract for construction, accept donations, purchase property, begin site work, or spend any project funds until you have a fully executed Contract Agreement and a Notice to Proceed.

Step 1: Project Management Workshop

Grantees should contact their Project Officer to schedule a virtual meeting to review your grant award and discuss the next steps. The CEO (i.e., mayor, county judge, or city manager) should be in attendance along with other essential parties such as the parks director, city clerk, grant writer, and engineer.

Step 2: Submit Documents for Review

Grantees must submit the following items to their Project Officer for review:

Estimated Project Cost

- If the Grantee was awarded less funding than their application requested, a revised budget will reflect the new total project cost and remove any existing line items, if applicable.
- If the Grantee's award is unchanged, a revised Estimated Project Cost may not be necessary.
- Only line items and project sites included in the original application can be included in the Estimated Project Cost

Construction Plans

- Grantee shall submit construction plans and any other drawings of sufficient detail for construction of the facility or facilities.
- Plans and specifications shall be submitted to the Project Officer within 30 days after the Project Management Workshop.

- Plans must clearly locate accessible sidewalks that extend from an accessible parking spot to each funded facility. The sidewalk's width, construction material, and maximum slopes should be indicated on the plans.
- Grantees must submit a revised site plan if any changes have been made since the application.
- It is strongly recommended that Grantees retain a landscape architect, engineer, or architect, licensed in the State of Arkansas, for the design of large structures such as rest rooms, concession stands, and pavilions. This will help ensure that all applicable state and federal laws governing the design and construction of public structures are followed.
- The Grantee is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all applicable design standards and building codes are met.

Project Specifications

- Site-built structures must include specifications of sufficient detail for a contractor to construct the facility.
- Specifications should clearly identify and describe all major construction materials that are appropriate for public use.
- Specifications for pre-fabricated facilities such as pavilion kits, playground equipment, basketball goals, trash containers, etc., may be from manufacturer's printed specification sheets that

-
- contain sufficient detail for review.
 - Playground equipment must comply with guidelines established by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Only new, commercial grade equipment specifically designed for public use can be grant-funded.
 - Areas under playground equipment must be surfaced with an impact absorbing material and shall be wheelchair accessible. Impact Materials must be tested and approved under American Society of Testing Materials (ASTM) regulations.
 - Designs for Sidewalks, trails, and/or other walk ways must indicate the type of paving material and be accessible to those with disabilities. Barrier-free access is required for all grant-funded facilities.
 - Parking spaces should be a minimum of 9' wide by 18' long and include at least one accessible parking space for every 25 typical parking spaces. Accessible parking spaces must be designated with a sign and constructed of a hard surface material suitable for wheelchair travel.

Land Acquisition

Grantees who acquire land through donation or fee-simple purchase must submit a finding of value or a formal appraisal. The land's reimbursable value will be based off of these documents. Grant awards cannot be increased in the event the land is found to have a higher value than expected.

- Finding of Value
 - o For property with an anticipated value of \$25,000 or less, the Grantee can provide a written finding of value.
 - o This can be prepared by a knowledgeable person such as a real estate broker, banker, or local appraiser.
 - o 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.
- Formal Appraisal
 - o For property with an anticipated value of \$25,000 or more, the Grantee must purchase a formal appraisal.
 - o The appraisal must comply with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). <http://www.uspap.org>

- o The appraisal must be sent to your Project Officer, where it will then be forwarded to the Appraisal Division of the Arkansas Department of Transportation for review to assure that all standards have been met.
- o Please note that USPAP appraisals are different than that of a typical real estate appraisal.
- o Formal appraisals do not qualify as a reimbursable expense

Step 3: Grantee Understands and Adheres to Their Own Procurement Laws

Grantees are responsible for adhering to the procurement laws specific to their jurisdiction including bidding requirements and local ordinances. Please contact your Project Officer with any questions.

Step 4: Grantee Signs Contract Agreement and Project Boundary Map(s)

Grantees will receive a Contract Agreement and a Project Boundary Map for each funded park once the previous steps are complete. The Contract Agreement will list facilities that may be funded by the grant. The Project Boundary Map(s) will illustrate the area that must remain in outdoor recreational use in perpetuity.

The Grantee's CEO must sign where indicated on the Contract Agreement and Project Boundary Map(s) and return them to their Project Officer. Please note: The Contract Agreement and Project Boundary Map(s) are binding in perpetuity. The CEO should consult with the Project Officer before signing if they have any questions about this obligation. The ORGP Director will also sign the document and return a copy to the Grantee.

A reduction of scope may be requested once construction begins if the Grantee finds the facility costs exceed the awarded grant amount. Any change in scope will require ORGP Director approval.

Step 5: Grantee Receives Fully Executed Contract and Notice to Proceed

A Notice to Proceed will be mailed to the Grantee in a bound document which includes the fully executed Contract Agreement and Project Boundary Map(s). This bound document should be made part of the

Grantee's permanent record.

Grantees must not solicit bids, contract for construction, accept donations, purchase property, begin site work, or spend any project funds until they have received a fully executed Contract Agreement and a Notice to Proceed. Any development costs incurred before this point will not be eligible for reimbursement.

Step 6: Grantee Begins Project

Grantees shall begin the procurement process and construction within 60 days of the Notice to Proceed date. Please notify your Project Officer, either by letter or email, if you are not able to meet this deadline. Explain the reasons for the delay and provide a time line for the completion of the project.

Grantees may submit a written request for a Contract Amendment if additional time is needed or if the removal of a Contract's line item is necessary. The request letter should clearly indicate the proposed changes, why they are necessary, and must be signed by the CEO.

Circumstances may occur that make it impossible for the Grantee to complete the project as identified in the Contract Agreement. If this is the case, please notify your Project Officer as soon as possible. We will work with you to bring the project to an end and still provide the community with a viable recreation area. If the Grantee has not yet received a reimbursement, a written request may be made to withdraw the grant as a whole. Again, please contact your Project Officer if this is the case.

Step 7: Quarterly Status Reports

Grantee shall send their Project Officer a status report on their grant project at least once every three months. This provides Project Officers with the information they need to plan progress inspections.

Step 8: Reimbursement Requests

Grantees may submit reimbursement requests as often as they wish. Requests are typically submitted by Grantees after a facility is completed or the entire grant project has been completed. Please contact your Project Officer prior to submitting the request so they

can schedule an inspection of the facilities that are being reimbursed. Grantees may be asked to forward digital photographs of the facilities in lieu of on-site inspections.

Reimbursement requests are processed immediately after they are received. Please allow 2-3 weeks for processing. Reimbursement requests that are incomplete or do not follow the correct format may be returned to the Grantee without being processed. Before submitting your reimbursement request, please review the steps outlined in Part 3.

Step 9: Reimbursement Mailed to Grantee

Grantees will receive a state warrant reimbursing them for half the cost of approved project expenses. Included with the warrant will be a Project Data Sheet detailing line item expenses and a letter outlining the Grantee's responsibilities.

Expenses in the reimbursement request that are not approved will be noted on the Project Data Sheet.

Step 10: Notify Your Project Officer as the Project Nears Completion

Grantees should notify their Project Officer when the project is nearing completion and schedule a final inspection. If any deficiencies are found during the final inspection, the Grantee will be sent a letter detailing the problems with recommendations for correcting them. Your final reimbursement request will be processed after all identified deficiencies have been corrected and the grant project has been completed and open to the public.

The Grantee will be mailed a small sign, known as a grant acknowledgment sign, indicating Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant funds were used to acquire and/or develop public outdoor recreation facilities. This sign must be permanently mounted within the park in a prominent location.

Step 11: Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony or Park Dedication

Grantees are encouraged to hold a park dedication or ribbon-cutting ceremony once their project and final inspection has been completed. This is a great time for

city or county officials to recognize the efforts of local workers, volunteers, and political leaders who played an active role in the project or those who assisted the city or county with the application process. This ceremony also encourages community awareness and promotes good community relations.

Step 12: Post-Completion Inspections

An inspection will be made at least once every five years to ensure that your park is well maintained, that the grant acknowledgment sign is still in place, that no ineligible items have been added within the project boundary, and that all applicable regulations associated with the Matching Grant are being met.

Reimbursement Requests

General Information

Please notify your Project Officer once the project has been completed. All contract items listed on the Contract Agreement must be completed prior to final reimbursement. The final 20% of the grant may be withheld until all items are complete. Incomplete or illegible reimbursement requests may be returned to the grantee for re-submittal.

Only costs incurred during the contract period are eligible for reimbursement with the exception of administrative, landscape architectural, engineering, or architectural fees (administration costs count as a reimbursable expense as soon as a city is awarded a grant). All other payments and invoices that are associated with the grant project that are dated before or after the contract period will not be reimbursed.

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

The following items are not eligible for reimbursement:

- Finance charges and interest
- Legal fees
- Tool purchases
- Formal appraisal (USPAP) or finding of land value
- Incidental costs related to land acquisition, such as:
 - o Appraisals
 - o Abstracts
 - o Recording fees, etc.

Please contact your Project Officer if you have any questions or need clarification regarding the reimbursement request process.

Reimbursement Forms

Reimbursement Summary Sheet

A detailed list of all items to be reimbursed. Please fill this form out to the best of your ability. Instructions are outlined on the Reimbursement Checklist.

City/County Employee's Time Record

Refers to employees of the Grantee, commonly known as force account labor. A separate form must be used for each week of work. Each form must be signed by employee(s) and the supervisor. If employee(s) do not have a direct supervisor, the CEO may sign the form.

Value of Donated Labor

Donated labor should be based on local prevailing wage rates for general labor. If the labor donation is from a specialized trade, such as a licensed plumber or electrician, then the rate should be consistent with that of the profession.

Value of City/County or Donated Equipment Use

Equipment values may be determined by FEMA rates or by quotes from local equipment rental vendors. All rates must match the specific equipment being used.

Value of Donated Material

Donated materials must be documented with statements or letters stating the value of the donation and must be endorsed by the donor.

Reimbursement Checklist

- ___ 1. All requests for reimbursement must be sent via the Foundant portal (or email if necessary).
- ___ 2. A cover letter, dated and signed by the CEO (mayor, county judge, or city manager), must accompany the reimbursement request. This letter must include the project number, total dollar amount requested, and the number of the request (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.). The letter must also include the name and telephone number of the person who can answer questions about the request.
- ___ 3. Legible copies of invoices must document the receipt by the Grantee of goods or services obtained through the procurement process, and include copies of all canceled check(s) or proof of electronic payment they represent. If the invoices are not itemized, or cannot be clearly read, they will be returned to the Grantee without reimbursement.

Invoices must contain:
 - The item's name, quantity, and unit cost
 - Tax (if applicable)
 - Total Cost
 - Vendor's name and address
- ___ 4. The Reimbursement Summary Sheet should contain the following:
 - Project title
 - Project number
 - Reimbursement number
 - Current Date
 - Line item to be reimbursed (as indicated on the Contact Agreement)
 - Reference number for the purchase (either a check number or the page number of donated labor, donated materials, equipment use, or city/county labor sheets)
 - Total amount of the payment

The sum of each individual column should equal the sum of the line total column.
- ___ 5. Grantee must show both sides of all canceled checks or proof of electronic payments. Proof of payment and invoices should be stapled together in the order they appear on the Reimbursement Summary Sheet.
- ___ 6. Package the Reimbursement Request in the following order:
 - Cover letter
 - Reimbursement Summary Sheet
 - Invoices next to proof of payments
 - Other reimbursement forms such as donated labor, donated materials, equipment use, or city/county labor sheets

NOTE: Copies of bids, quotes, or cost estimates will not be accepted as invoices.

Value of Donated Material
Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant

| Project Number | | Job Site | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Contract Line Item | | Donor Name | |
| Donor Address | | | |
| Description of Material Donated | Date of Donation | Value of Donation | Basis of Value |
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| Total Value of Donation | | | |

*Signature of Verifying Official*_____
Date

Value of Donated Labor

Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant

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|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Project Number | Job Site |
| Contract Line Item | Work Performed |
| Name of Person Contributing Time | Hourly Rate Based on |

A person donating time to a project will be paid as a general laborer unless the donor is professionally skilled in the work performed (i.e., a plumber working on pipes, a mason working with bricks). When this is the case, the professional's usual rate may be charged to the project. A general laborer's wages may be charged in the amount of that which the city or county pays their employees for performing similar duties.

| Date | Time of Work | | | | Total Work Hours | Hourly Rate | Value of Donation |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-----|-------|-----|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| | Start | End | Start | End | | | |
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| Total Value of Donation | | | | | | | |

Signature of Donor

Date

Signature Verifying Record

Date

Signature Verifying Accuracy

Date

Value of Donated Equipment Use

Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant

| Project Number | | | Job Site | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Contract Line Item | | | Work Performed | | |
| Donor Name | | | Donor Address | | |
| Date | Equipment Type | Total Hours of Use | Hourly Rate | Value of Donation | Equipment Operator's Signature |
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| Total Value of Donation | | | | | |

Signature of Verifying Official

Date

Value of Sponsor's Equipment Use

Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant

| Project Number | | | Job Site | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Contract Line Item | | | Work Performed | | |
| Date | Equipment Type | Total Hours of Use | FEMA or Local Rate | Value of Use | Equipment Operator's Signature |
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| Total Value of Use | | | | | |

 Supervisor

 Date

Value of Sponsor's Employee Labor

Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant

[illegible]

The above time is certified as correct

Supervisor

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-------|
| Total | \$ | _____ |
| + FICA | \$ | _____ |
| + Pension | \$ | _____ |
| Grand Total | \$ | _____ |

Reimbursement Summary Sheet

Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant

| Project Title | Park Name | | | | Project Number | | Request Number | | Date | |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Contract Line Item | Reference Number* | Check Amount | Admin & Employee Wages | Arch & Eng Fees | Donations | Material Supplies | Sponsor Equip. Use | Real Property | Contract Construction | Line Total |
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| Totals | | | | | | | | | | |

* Check number, invoice number, or DM, DL, DE, SL, SE sheet number