

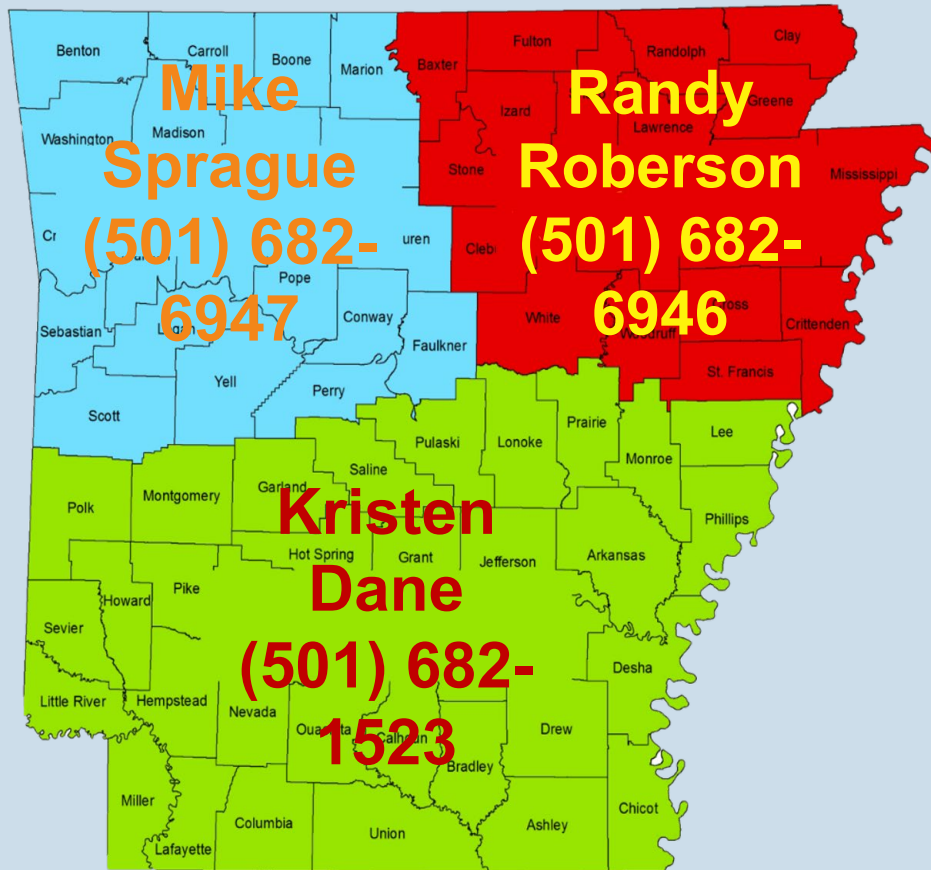
The best little grant workshop in
Arkansas,

or:

How I learned to stop worrying and
love the red tape.

Outdoor Recreation Grants Program

www.outdoorgrants.com



50/50 Matching Grants

	MATCHING	
ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	All cities and counties	
MAX AWARD	\$250,000	
GRANT TYPE	50/50 Matching Grant	
FUNDING	Grantee reimbursed up to 50% of eligible project costs	
ELIGIBLE PROJECTS	Development of outdoor recreation facilities, or, Land acquisition	
ENGINEER FEES	Up to 12% of development	
ADMIN FEES	Up to 10% of development	

How are the grants awarded?

- Applicants submit completed application
- Applications are scored after submission deadline
- Highest-scoring applicants are invited to the Committee Hearing. (score threshold based upon amount of money available and amount requested, and so varies year to year)
- Applicant presents project to Committee
- Governor-appointed committee makes funding recommendations (*not* ORGP staff)

Frequently Asked Matching Grant Questions

How often can I apply for funding?

Each year

How often can I receive funding?

Each year

Can funding be used as a match for any other grant?

No.

Must applicant own project site?

Yes. (Lease is acceptable if lessor is State or Federal government.)

Can the funds be used to purchase land?

Yes.

What procurement guidelines do I follow?

Grantees are responsible for following procurement laws applicable to their local jurisdiction for bidding and purchases.

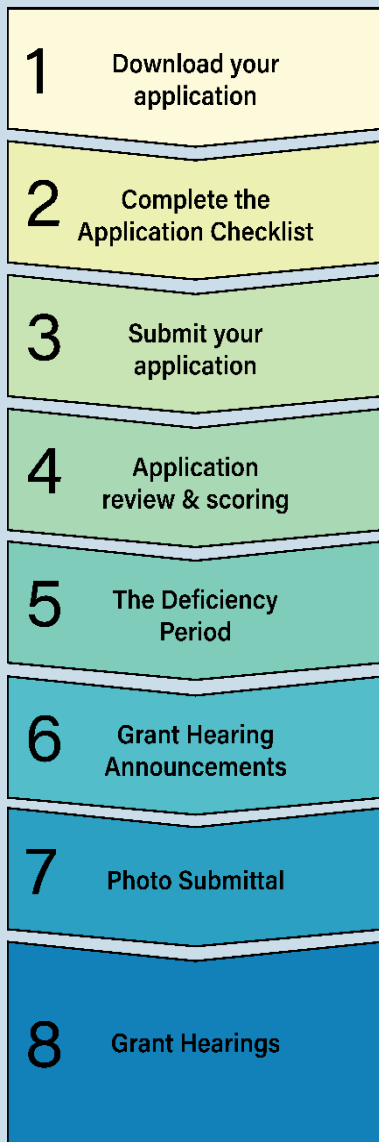
What accessibility guidelines do I follow?

All grant-funded facilities must be wheelchair accessible and open to the public at all reasonable hours of the day.

Can I change my project after I have received funding?

You may reduce your project's scope of work, excluding accessibility to remaining work and/or line items for which your application received points.

The Application Process



1. Access your application materials by visiting www.outdoorgrants.com.
2. Matching and FUN Park grants have different requirements. Some items are time sensitive.
3. All applications must be postmarked by the last Friday in August.
4. Project Officers review applications to ensure all required materials have been submitted. Applications are then scored appropriately.
5. If a required material was not submitted with application, the Applicant will be notified and given adequate time to correct any deficiencies. Initial application scoring is final and cannot be adjusted in the deficiency period.
6. Applicant will receive a letter indicating their score and whether they have been invited to the Grant Hearings.
7. FUN Park grant applicant may submit up to 10 photos of the project's site.
8. Matching grant applicants will present an 8-minute audio/visual presentation in front of the Governor Appointed Outdoor Recreation Grants Advisory Committee

Important Dates to Remember

May 31, 2022	Last day to schedule a site visit for maximum score
June 24, 2022	Last day to advertise a public meeting for maximum score
June 30, 2022	Last day to conduct community outreach for maximum score. Last day to hold a public meeting for maximum score.
Last Friday in August	Application Deadline
October 26-28, 2022	Grant Hearings

Required Application Materials

Matching Grant

1. Cover Sheet
2. Project Narrative
3. Estimated Project Cost
4. SCORP Priority Assessment
5. Fund Source Assurance
6. City Council Resolution or
Quorum Court Order
7. Proof of Land Control
8. Site Location Map
9. Site Plan
10. Project Boundary Map

Required for Land Acquisition

Matching Grant

1. Letter of Intent to Sell or Donate
2. Deed of Proposed Acquisition
3. Commitment for Title Insurance*
4. Plan for Delayed Development**

*Commitment for Title Insurance is only required if the land to be acquired does not come with a warranty deed

** Plan for Delayed Development is only required if the application is to acquire land that will not be immediately developed

Required for Additional Points

Matching Grant

1. Table of Content
2. Site Visit by July 31
3. Community Outreach
4. Letter from Licensed Design Professional
5. Public Meeting
6. Fund Source Assurance
7. Improved Barrier Free Access (see application guide for details)
8. Improved Play Equipment (see application guide for details)
9. Use of Licensed Professional
10. Advanced Site Plan

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 3 of this application guide for more detailed information on how the Priority Rating System may affect your grant application.

1. Table of Contents

Application includes a table of contents with corresponding page numbers:

Yes	2
No	0

2. Date Site Visit Was Scheduled

Applicant spoke with Project Officer to set up site visit:

Before July 1	5
July 1 - July 31	2
August / No Site Visit	0

3. Community Outreach

Documented outreach (per activity or meeting):

Before July 1:	2
Before July 1:	2
Before July 1:	2
On or after July 1:	1
On or after July 1:	1
On or after July 1:	1
On or after July 1:	1
On or after July 1:	1
On or after July 1:	1

max: 6pts

4. Parks Committee

Applicant has provided evidence of an active parks committee:

Yes	2
No	0

5. Public Meeting

Conducted a public meeting according to standards contained within the Application Guide:

Note: Standards are outlined on page 25

Before July 1	4
Between July 1 and July 31	3
After July 31 -or- Not all items submitted	1
No public meeting	0

6. 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
Mostly promised donations (including cash, labor, materials, and/or equipment use)	0

select one option only

7. Improved Barrier Free Access

Project will construct barrier free access to existing facilities within one or more parks; Or, all existing parks within the applicant's jurisdiction already meet standards for barrier free access:

Yes	2
No	0

8. Improved Play Equipment

Replaces play equipment with new equipment that complies with CPSC guidelines; or, brings existing playground fall zones into compliance with ADA and CPSC guidelines; or, all existing playgrounds in the community comply with ADA and CPSC guidelines.

Yes	2
No	0

9. Use of Licensed 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

10. Advanced Site Plan

At the time of the application's submittal, applicant includes a site plan with a proportionally accurate project area, identifies all application line items, and identifies barrier-free access to all proposed and facilities (identify handicapped parking, paved walkways, ramps, bridges, etc.)

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

11. Grant History

Applicant has not received an Outdoor Recreation Grant in the past:

Never	4
21 years or more	2
11-20 years	1
10 years or less	0

12. Open Projects

Applicant does not currently have any open Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant funded project and; has received a grant within the last two fiscal years

Yes	4
No	0

13. Deficiency-free Application

Application's "Required Materials" were submitted without any deficiencies:

Yes	4
No	0

FOR PROJECT OFFICER USE ONLY**A. Advertisement Checklist**

Newspaper

Date of advertisement		
Proof of publication	Yes	No
Newspaper clipping	Yes	No

Posted Notice

Date of Advertisement		
Copy of posted notice	Yes	No
Letter from CEO listing posted locations	Yes	No

B. Public Meeting Checklist

Date of meeting		
Minutes of meeting	Yes	No
Sign-in sheet	Yes	No

C. SCORP Priority Assessment

Connectivity	1
Community	1
Innovation	1
Accommodation	1
Stewardship	1

D. Total Score

Page 1	
Page 2	
Page 3	
PRS Total	

BONUS:

SCORP Priority Assessment	
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Public Meeting Requirements

Advertising the Meeting

1. Advertise at least 7 days in advance
2. Select advertising method

Newspaper

- Proof of Publication
- Newspaper Clipping

Posted Notice

- Copy of Posted Notice
- List of Posting Locations

Holding the Meeting

1. Hold at a time and place convenient for the community
2. Submit minutes of the meeting
 - a) Include statements and suggestions from the general public
3. Submit a sign-in sheet
 - a) Indicate the name, address, and organizational affiliation (if applicable)

Community Outreach Requirements

This activity encourages applicants to engage with special interest groups and under-served persons in your community who may not attend a public meeting.

Advertising the public meeting does not count as community outreach.

In-Person Meetings

Social Media

Media Broadcast

Community Outreach Requirements

In-Person Meetings

1. Can hold multiple meetings per application
2. Must submit:
 - a) Name of group contacted
 - b) Date of contact or meeting
 - c) Sign-in or registration sheet
 - d) Minutes of meeting or notes of input received
3. Examples include:
 - a) Ethnic/racial minority groups
 - b) Persons with special needs
 - c) Senior citizens
 - d) School children

Community Outreach Requirements

Social Media

1. Can only be counted **once per application**
2. Must submit screenshot(s) of:
 - a) Name of posting organization
 - b) Date of posting
 - c) Content of post
 - d) Comments and responses, if any
3. Examples include:
 - a) Facebook
 - b) Twitter

Community Outreach Requirements

Media Broadcast

1. Can only be counted **once per application**
2. Must submit written statement from applicant's CEO certifying:
 - a) Type of media broadcast
 - b) Name of broadcasting organization
 - c) Summary of what was discussed
3. Examples include:
 - a) Radio
 - b) Television

SCORP Priority Assessment



3. Application Materials - Applicants

Outdoor Recreation Matching Grant
SCORP Priority Assessment
 Outdoor Recreation Grants Program
 Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism

Applicant Name: _____
 Project Number: _____

1. SCORP PRIORITIES
 Please refer to 20 of the Arkansas SCORP and address at least one of the following priorities:

a. **Community:** Making connections between residents and facilities that are currently disconnected.

b. **Community:** Enabling connectivity between through projects that allow the benefits of everything fit.
These aren't any pavilions close to the Searsville City Park. Building a pavilion in this park will be a resource for birthday parties, family reunions, a farmers market, etc.

c. **Interventions:** Managing resources and creating new experiences for underserved populations.

d. **Accommodation:** Addressing changing demographics and recognizing marginalized populations.
Searsville has residents who have some form of physical impairment. An all-inclusive playground will allow those with a cane or those in a wheelchair to experience and enjoy the playground the same as someone without a physical impairment.

2. Executive Officer

Name: _____ Title: _____
 Signature: _____ Date: _____
 Print Name: _____
 Title: _____

EXAMPLE

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a 5-year road map for improving outdoor recreation in Arkansas.

A reference to the SCORP is required.

Additionally, applicants are encouraged to describe the way(s) in which their project meets one or more of the SCORP Priorities.

Priority 4: Accommodation
Adapting to changing demographics and recognizing marginalized populations

Accommodation involves creating spaces for a wide range of users and experiences. It can include things like accessible trails, inclusive programming, and more. The goal is to ensure that everyone can enjoy the outdoors.

Other Questions to Consider

- How does your project address the needs of underserved populations?
- How does your project address the needs of people with disabilities?
- How does your project address the needs of people with limited mobility?

Priority Spotlight: Inverness Beach League Field and Playground

More than just accessible... Accessibility is a goal of every park. Inverness Beach League Field and Playground is a great example of how to create an inclusive space for everyone.

ACCOMMODATION: Summary & Recommendations

Priority	Response	Recommendation
1. Community
2. Community
3. Interventions
4. Accommodation

Scores assigned to the responses in this category are only relevant to applicants who are invited to the Grant Hearings. The Committee may consider SCORP responses when making funding recommendations.

Priority 1: Connectivity

Making connections to communities and facilities that currently are disconnected

The first SCORP Priority is "Connectivity." Once again, recreation providers can meet this priority in any number of ways, and in ways that are most appropriate and feasible for their city, county, or constituency. The idea of connectivity in public outdoor recreation is the same as the idea of connectivity generally: it's the notion that an interconnected web of public outdoor recreation opportunities is better than isolated facilities.

Connective trails are one of the most common examples of connectivity in public outdoor recreation. Walking is ranked #1 among all recreation activities, and has held a top position in every Arkansas SCORP. It should also be noted that walking is the activity that cuts across all demographic categories to a greater degree than any other. And while people still enjoy going to the park and walking around a track or through the woods on a winding paved trail, more and more Arkansans are saying they enjoy trails that take them from point A to point B, and beyond. If a walking trail begins in one park and ends in another, or winds its way through town and provides the walker with access to other recreational facilities or public spaces, then that project will have met the Connectivity Priority.

And while connecting your community is a fine goal to have, there's no reason to stop there! Perhaps your city is near the route of a larger, longer trail system; if so, the connection of your local trail system to the wider world may encourage exploration by locals, and perhaps a lengthy and profitable visit from adventurous folks from elsewhere.

For those far removed from such thoroughfares, a connective trail might provide access to the scenic countryside outside of town. In bucolic,

rural Arkansas, a little trail to "nowhere" might well be a trail to somewhere...a somewhere an adventurous child could explore, or a long-time resident may have never frequented otherwise. Any connectivity—no matter the locations connected—is a tie that binds a community one to another, individual with group, group with nature, and one to all. In a connected community, the journey truly counts as much as the destination.

While a simple idea, large connective trails can be very expensive to design and implement, and they are by no means the only way to meet this Priority. Merely connecting disparate facilities within a single park—via walking trail or wheelchair-accessible pathways, for example—is a step toward greater connectivity.

Ideas for Connections

- Connecting parks to each other
- Connecting the community to the greater city
- Connecting the city to the greater region
- Connecting existing facilities with accessible sidewalks
- Use existing connections
- Use right-of-ways from abandoned railroads

Priority Spotlight: The Razorback Greenway



Make connections that extend beyond your city limits!

At 36 miles, the Razorback Greenway connects not only communities, but entire cities. All of the towns along its length are made accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists, making it both fun and practical.

CONNECTIVITY: Barriers & Recommendations

BARRIERS	OUR RECOMMENDATIONS
Income Inequality	Consider routing trails or safe routes for people who cannot afford or have limited access to vehicles Some children have parents who work two jobs. Give those kids a safe route to walk or bike to school or a nearby park
Feeling Unsafe	Proper lighting: Use string lights above alleyways or have uplit trees and buildings where street lights may not reach Place trails in high-use areas. People may feel safer when they are surrounded by other individuals
Nobody to Go With	Your city or a local organization can implement programs to create opportunities for community interaction
Physical Impairment	Connect new and existing facilities with accessible paths
Lack of Free Time	Bike share programs are great for those wanting to commute or explore the area Offer trails or designated paths in close proximity to residential areas Make it so someone could bike to work with ease. It may take just as much time to drive as it does to bike!

Priority 2: Community

Fostering community interaction through projects that fit into the rhythms of everyday life

Many survey respondents expressed a desire for community-centered projects, leading SCORP staff to include "Community" as a SCORP Priority.

Almost any project that fosters community interaction more or less through happenstance—rather than through purposeful association, as with, e.g., sports leagues—will be in keeping with the Community Priority. While not a requirement of this priority, projects that focus on a town or city's downtown area are especially appropriate.

Examples of such projects are downtown pavilions, which might be used to host community-centered activities, like farmers markets, community gardens, community-centered activities, or design "pocket parks", wherein small open spaces in urban cores (often an abandoned lot) are converted into small green spaces for resting, visiting, eating, or impromptu gatherings of friends and family.

Programming

Along with providing appropriate spaces for community-centered projects, it is also important to have these spaces properly programmed. In one sense, "programming" is very similar to "design". However, programming goes beyond "design" in that it takes into consideration the many external factors that can make or break a park's success.

While having a park for its own sake is not necessarily a bad thing, it's a much better thing to design a community space with a mind toward its possible planned uses. Will this space lend itself to picnicking? Lunch breaks for downtown workers? Or perhaps something more elaborate, such as impromptu jam sessions on a Saturday night, or a free movie screening hosted by the local library or church or Rotary Club. While the best-laid plans of planners and providers sometimes go awry, a

properly programmed park will have a much better chance at becoming a valued and cherished community space for years to come.

Along with the process of planning your outdoor community space to foster the kinds of activities most likely to engage your local populace, it's important to provide the opportunity for the community members to take ownership of those spaces and find new and interesting ways to take advantage of their park. To that end, planners might want to initiate inclusive activities within that new community space. Invite local experts or hobbyists to provide free, community-wide workshops. Local gardeners, beekeepers, craftspersons...each community has a hidden expert or two, many of whom are more than happy to share their passion. Planning your project for a productive use of your community space will help ensure its success as a community hub.

The Community Priority lends itself to imagination, and can be employed in both large and small projects. At its core, this Priority is about providing outdoor recreation spaces within the context of everyday life.

Don't forget about trails!

Trails, especially those that connect community spaces (parks, neighborhoods, downtowns), encourage a slower, friendlier, more interactive daily routine for everyone.

Voila! Community!

Priority Spotlight: Wynne Splash Park and Farmers Market



Invigorate your community with a multi-purpose space!

With greenspace, play equipment, walkable pathways, and pavilions—all located in the center of town, accessible by all—this project is both passive and active, and exemplifies the Community Priority.

COMMUNITY: Barriers & Recommendations

BARRIERS	OUR RECOMMENDATIONS
Income Inequality	Provide free programmed events like a seasonal concert series or movies in the park
Feeling Unsafe	Give opportunities for multi-cultural events such as food festivals or art shows. Diversifying the use within a space may encourage use for all nationalities, races, and genders Proper programming can make spaces feel safe even when nobody else is present
Nobody to Go With	Program spaces that can be a 'get-away' for someone seeking solidarity Program spaces and events where people can connect and/or relate to others over shared interests (i.e. community gardens, e-sport competitions, cycling tours)
Physical Impairment	Provide an adequate number of seating areas
Lack of Free Time	Develop communal spaces in close proximity to workplaces to cater to those taking a 30 to 60 minute lunch break

Priority 3: Innovation

Maximizing resources and creating new experiences by re-purposing neglected facilities

Along with the survey distributed to the users of Arkansas's public outdoor recreation resources, SCORP staff disseminated a similar survey to professionals who provide and maintain public outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities. These recreation providers expressed a desire and a need to keep up with current recreation trends in the face of budgetary constraints and lack of resources (see Appendix D). This led to the inclusion of "Innovation" as a Priority.

As the word implies, projects that are in keeping with the Innovation Priority will be ones that seek to revitalize, reinvigorate, or even reinvent public outdoor recreation opportunities in their communities. Innovation may apply to physical structures, vacant urban areas, or possibly somewhere in between.

Innovation might also be reflected in a new and interesting way to utilize a neglected recreation space, or re-purpose outdated or out-of-favor facilities. Perhaps a disused tennis court is converted to a pickleball court, or an outdated baseball field is converted to a community garden space.

Along with providing citizens with new and interesting opportunities in their shared outdoor spaces, innovative re-purposing of existing facilities can help cash-strapped communities revitalize public outdoor recreation while practicing fiscal restraint.

When it is feasible to use existing superstructures or other professional-grade facility components, it becomes easier to involve the community in the execution of an innovative project. When the work of professionals has already been done, laypersons can provide the labor necessary to re-stripe that tennis court and string that pickleball net; a baseball field no longer in use is still a professionally graded and leveled space ideal for the construction of simple raised plots.

Under the direction of an innovative and creative parks professional, a community workday can result in a new, vibrant facility more in keeping with the wishes of a modern, changing populace.

As with the innovative spirit itself, the ways to implement the Innovation Priority are practically limitless.

Think outside the box!

Yes, even this box! Opportunities to make new forms of outdoor recreation lie around every corner. Talk with your community and see what they have to say.

You'll be surprised with the ideas that they come up with!

Priority Spotlight: Historic Crawfordsville High School Campus



This old gymnasium will be reborn!

Long neglected, the old CHS gym is being repurposed as an open-air, multi-purpose facility. Innovative thinking has allowed Crawfordsville to use a beloved old structure to anchor a new and vibrant park.

INNOVATION: Barriers & Recommendations

BARRIERS	OUR RECOMMENDATIONS
Income Inequality	Turning an existing space into a free-use park
Feeling Unsafe	Turning blighted space into greenspace may help remove the perception of danger
Physical Impairment	Retrofitting playground equipment
Nobody to Go With	Utilize social media to find and include marginalized communities
Lack of Free Time	Partner with local businesses to expand pocket parks into commercial/industrial campuses

Priority 4: Accommodation

Adapting to changing demographics and recognizing marginalized populations

All recreation providers want their parks to be accommodating to all users; no worthy provider would intentionally exclude any person or user group from a communal space. As such, it might seem unnecessary to include Accommodation as a SCORP Priority. Based on survey responses, however, we feel this Priority is an important one.

Accommodation means much more than the bare minimum of including a sidewalk and wheelchair ramp, making a previously inaccessible area accessible. While it may be true that most parks could use a few upgrades for wheelchair access, there are demographics beyond the physically impaired that experience barriers to outdoor recreation. This Priority encourages providers to look—really look—at their communities, and make an honest assessment of the services provided by their public spaces and facilities.

Are the demographics of the town changing?

Are there new faces and groups moving into the community?

Are accessible ramps truly accommodating those with limited mobility?

Similar to the previous Priority, Innovation, the Accommodation Priority challenges outdoor recreation providers to find creative solutions to overcome existing barriers.

Meeting this Priority might be as simple as providing an opportunity tailored to a new or growing demographic within the larger community. This could be establishing soccer

fields in a community that has recently seen a growth in its Hispanic population, or including benches and shade structures along a walking trail commonly frequented by senior citizens.

It might also mean intertwining wheelchair-accessible infrastructure to where it runs alongside existing play structure. This would open up the play area to allow children in wheelchairs, parents with physical impairments, and even grandparents with limited mobility to be right alongside other scampering youngsters.

At the end of the day, meeting this Priority will mean adapting to changes in daily life, practicing empathy for the whole community, and taking great pains to truly learn each and every group within the community, and what Accommodation means to them.

Other Questions to Consider

- What are some ways you can make the existing infrastructure of your parks more accommodating?
- Are your parks engaging those with physical impairments, or just meeting the minimum requirements?

Priority Spotlight: Jonesboro Miracle League Field and Playground



More than just accessible... Accommodating!

Baseball, playground, seating: In this all-inclusive facility, no distinction is made between those with or without a physical impairment. The design integrates activities for everyone, regardless of ability.

ACCOMMODATION: Barriers & Recommendations

BARRIERS	OUR RECOMMENDATIONS
Income Inequality	Propose projects in or near public housing developments
Feeling Unsafe	Include multi-lingual signage within park, trail, and playground systems Engage with local veterans to promote neighborhood watch programs
Physical Impairment	For best results, include persons who are physically impaired in parks commissions and hold focus group meetings at rehabilitation or special needs centers
Nobody to Go With	Create spaces that can accommodate for cultural uniqueness and changing demographics Engage with local seniors - initiate mentor programs

Priority 5: Stewardship

Preserving and re-purposing the built environment while conserving and protecting the natural one

While change is good, the wheel doesn't always need to be reinvented, and that is why "Stewardship" is the last, but not least, SCORP Priority. Along with their desire to meet changing demographics and public interest with new and interesting facilities, public recreation providers expressed the need to care for and maintain the existing facilities the locals already use and enjoy. To meet the Stewardship priority means preserving and conserving all of the public resources in one's care, both man-made and natural.

The Built Environment

Meeting the Stewardship Priority might mean renovating an existing outdoor recreation facility to improve safety, to increase accessibility for the disabled, or just to enhance the aesthetics and appeal of an old-but-loved park feature.

At the heart of this priority are the tried-and-true Arkansas values of thrift and ingenuity. While there's nothing wrong with a brand-new facility, there's also nothing quite like an old, sturdy facility—maybe a little worse for wear, but still strong and full of memories—being given a new lease on life through a little bit of imagination and elbow grease. The result is a newly-viable piece of the local park at half the cost and with twice the emotional investment.

The Natural Environment

Though it's important to care for and preserve our material past, it's also imperative that public recreation providers protect our rapidly-disappearing natural environment. Nature preserves are not only the purview of state and federal governments, and they need not be huge, grand swaths of wildlands; acquiring a few acres of old trees in the middle of town is an act of Stewardship, as is restoring a streambank that runs through a neighborhood. Not all parks need pavilions and playgrounds; sometimes what a community needs is a nice big tree under which to sit, and babbling brook in which to wade. Stewardship means caring for all that we have, and claiming as much as possible for the enjoyment of all citizens.

Stewardship does not apply only to structures; it can also be understood as "conservation". Projects that place an emphasis on wildlife or habitat conservation will be in keeping with the Stewardship Priority, as will projects that entail environmentally-friendly elements such as native-plant landscaping or renewable-resource utilization (such as installing solar panels in restroom or concession facilities), or controlling flooding and runoff in public outdoor recreation areas through rain gardens or other ecologically-sound mitigation strategies.

Interpretation

Stewardship of both the built and natural environment is enhanced through interpretation. Without the context of interpretation, the public may not be aware of a structure's importance. Is the refurbished pavilion the site of an important local event? A sign or a plaque will enhance the public's enjoyment of that facility and may inspire more citizens to take personal responsibility for its preservation and protection.

Conservation areas are likewise enhanced through interpretation. To a screen-addled youngster, a forested area might be nothing more than a bunch of trees and briars. But with a cleared understory, a simple path, and interpretive signs providing some guidance—what kind of tree, what critters might be hiding in its boughs, the local significance of this patch of woods—that batch of trees becomes an adventure, rewarding the curious person, young or old, who makes the journey with their imagination on and their phone turned off.

When considering safety, interpretive programs and guided walks can ease concerned users by providing an informative and enjoyable way to explore the area, all while enhancing one's experience.

Interpretation can take an innovative form, as well. QR-codes or proximity beacons can be applied to the signs adorning trees or the plaques affixed to statues or structures, allowing tech-savvy visitors to be whisked away to a land of living trees and talking stone, all while safely ensconced in their neighborhood park.

Priority Spotlight: Fourche Creek Urban Wetland



Stewardship means both built and natural environments!

Fourche Creek in Little Rock provides an encompassing look at Stewardship. Protecting the natural landscape goes hand-in-hand with improving the built one through, in this case, a public boat launch.

STEWARDSHIP: Barriers & Recommendations

BARRIERS	OUR RECOMMENDATIONS
Income Inequality	Preserve and maintain existing facilities, especially within communities with frequent usage and lower income Create safe routes to give opportunities for those without transportation to experience nature
Feeling Unsafe	Improve lighting conditions, consider using energy efficient or solar powered fixtures Increase visibility by maintaining foliage and removing the understory of a wooded area Proper signage can educate park users of dangerous and/or unfamiliar species in the area
Physical Impairment	Create nature trails that meet ADA requirements
Nobody to Go With	Engage community groups with events like an invasive species cleanup

Matching Grant Projects



