

North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department

Park System Grant Program (PSGP) Program Manual



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Revised: 5/20/2023

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Program Description

The Park System Grant Program (PSGP) is a matching grant program offered by the North Dakota

Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD). The PSGP is a 50/50 cash only matching grant reimbursement program administered by the NDPRD for city, county, and tribal park systems. The PSGP provides grants for recreation projects such as ball fields, pools, campgrounds, playgrounds, and other recreation facilities utilized to support local park systems.

Only project proposals in accordance with the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), reviewed through an Open Project Selection Process (OPSP), and recommended by the PSGP Advisory Board to the Director of the NDPRD may be considered. The Director of the NDPRD is the final authority for approval of submitted projects.

General Provisions

Project Application

The project application and all required appendixes are available on the NDPRD website at [Grants | ND Parks and Recreation - Business and Grants](#) .

Web Grants Application Submission

Applications for the PSGP will be available on-line through the grants administration platform, Web Grants. NDPRD has worked to establish this grant administration program to ensure potential grantees have ease to accessing and submitting applications for the PSGP. Please visit the Web Grants website at <https://grants.nd.gov/index.do> for grant round updates and application submission.

Project Timeline

Sponsors must complete projects within 18 months of the project being awarded.

State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

In order for a project to be selected for funding, it must show a need in the SCORP for the legislative planning region in which the project will be developed. The SCORP is available on the NDPRD website: <https://www.parkrec.nd.gov/business/planning/state-comprehensive-outdoor-recreation-plan-scorp>

ND Main Street Initiative

The grant program also aligns with the state's Main Street Initiative to build healthy, vibrant communities that attract and retain a skilled workforce by providing critical outdoor recreation opportunities. Please visit [Main Street North Dakota \(nd.gov\)](#) for further information.

Environmental Clearances

To ensure environmentally, historically, and culturally important properties are not negatively affected, some projects that have significant ground disturbance may be requested by the NDPRD to

have an environmental clearance. Requested projects must be reviewed for clearance through the ND State Historic Preservation Office, ND Department of Transportation, and the ND Natural Heritage Inventory. Eligible applicants are encouraged to begin the environmental clearance process prior to submitting their applications if their project will have significant ground disturbance.

Eligible Applicants

North Dakota Cities, Counties, and Federally recognized Tribes are the only eligible applicants for this grant. Applicants must compete in an OPSP that provides objective criteria and standards for grant selection. The OPSP is dependent on the current SCORP which identifies eight different regions whose citizens have established priority, secondary, and tertiary outdoor recreation needs. Applicants are encouraged to only submit projects that are identified as priority needs for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation resources as identified in the SCORP.

Project sponsors will compete in one of two categories defined below and are limited to the described allocations. Population center total will be derived from the latest U.S. Census.

- Category A: Total Grant amount available - \$1,000,000
 - City, County, or Tribal community with population of 15,000 or less
 - Maximum grant award of \$150,000
- Category B: Total Grant amount available - \$5,000,000
 - City, County, or Tribal community with population of 15,001 or more
 - Maximum Grant Award - \$1,000,000

Applicants will be limited to two (2) project submissions per grant round. If two projects are submitted by any one entity, the entity must alert the NDPRD as to which is their primary and alternate submission.

Authorized Projects

Any project submission must indicate possession by the applicant agency or entity, of title and legal control of the property where work is to be performed.

The project sponsor is responsible for conducting research and being knowledgeable on all outstanding rights or claims to lands that will be included in a PSGP project. Authorized projects are categorized into three types of projects serving outdoor recreation: **development, repair, or renovation**. Projects whose primary intended use is for indoor activities not defined below will not be considered for funding.

Authorized Projects

PSGP funds may be used for the development of eligible outdoor recreation activities and/or support

activities needed by the public for recreation use identified in the SCORP.

Sports and playfields. PSGP assistance may be available for fields, courts and other outdoor spaces used in competitive and individual sports. This includes fields for baseball, softball, soccer and football, tennis courts, playgrounds and tot lots, golf courses, rifle/pistol ranges, trap/skeet fields, archery ranges, rodeo arenas, inline hockey rinks, skate parks, running tracks, and other similar facilities.

Picnic facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for tables, fireplaces, shelters, and other facilities related to family or group picnic sites.

Trails. PSGP assistance may be available for the development of land or water-based trails primarily for outdoor recreation activities such as nature walks, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, paddling, exercising, and off-road vehicles. The trails can connect parks with communities or other parks, be within parks, or serve as stand-alone recreation features. Trail projects can also include supporting features such as trailheads, overlooks, and turnouts.

Swimming facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for swimming beaches, outdoor pools, wave-making pools, wading pools, spray pools, lifeguard towers, bathhouses, and other similar facilities.

Boating facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for most facilities related to motor boating, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, sculling and other boating activities. These facilities include, but are not limited to, docks, berths, floating berths secured by buoys or similar services, launching ramps, breakwaters, mechanical launching devices, boat lifts, boat storage, sewage pump-out facilities, fuel depots, water and sewer hookups, restrooms, showers, electricity, and parking areas.

Fishing/hunting facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for areas and facilities that will provide opportunities for public fishing and hunting. This includes facilities and activities such as fishing piers, access points, fish hatcheries, tree stands, blinds, initial clearing and planting of food and cover, stream improvements, and other habitat improvements.

Public target range facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for outdoor target ranges such as archery, rifle, handgun, skeet, and trap facilities.

Winter sports facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for facilities such as: ski trails, jumps, lifts, slopes, and permanent snowmaking equipment used in downhill skiing, cross country skiing, tobogganing, sledding, snowmobiling, and other winter sports. Outdoor ice skating and ice hockey rinks are also eligible.

Camping facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for tables, fireplaces, restrooms, information stations, snack bars, utility outlets and other facilities needed for camping by tent, trailer, or camper. Cabins or group camps of simple basic design and accessible to the public in an equitable manner are

eligible.

Exhibit facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for outdoor exhibit or interpretive facilities that provide opportunities for the observation or interpretation of natural resources located on the recreation site or in its immediate surrounding areas. This includes small demonstration farms, arboretums, outdoor aquariums, outdoor nature exhibits, nature interpretive centers, and other similar facilities.

Community gardens. PSGP assistance may be available for land preparation, perimeter fencing, storage bins and sheds, irrigation systems, benches, walkways, parking areas, and restrooms for a community garden. To be eligible, community gardening must be clearly identified in the SCORP as a needed outdoor recreation activity and must be accessible to the public in an equitable manner

Renovated facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for extensive renovation or redevelopment to bring a facility up to standards of quality and attractiveness suitable for public use, if the facility or area has deteriorated to the point where its usefulness is impaired, or outmoded, or where it needs to be upgraded to meet public health and safety laws or requirements.

Support facilities. PSGP assistance may be available for support facilities needed by the public for outdoor recreation use of an area, such as roads, parking areas, utilities, sanitation systems, restroom buildings, simple cabins or trail hostels, warming huts, shelters, visitor information centers, kiosks, interpretive centers, bathhouses, permanent spectator seating, walkways, wayfinding/directional signage, pavilions, snack bar stands, and equipment rental spaces.

Operation and maintenance facilities. Facilities that support the operation and maintenance of the recreation resource on which they are located, such as maintenance buildings, storage areas, and administrative offices are eligible.

Erosion Control/Shoreline Stabilization. Within recreation areas, facilities or infrastructure needed to help preserve an existing PSGP-assisted area or recreation improvements from being lost due to erosion may be eligible for assistance.

Safety. Projects to directly increase safety in parks may be eligible for assistance. Facility related security improvements within, or along public parks and recreation areas can include infrastructure such as entrance kiosks, gates, fencing, communication utilities (phone lines, cell towers, etc.), fire suppression, and lighting.

Energy conservation elements. PSGP assistance may be available to install energy efficiency improvements or alternative energy sources to support an outdoor recreation area. This includes but is not limited to solar energy systems, earth berms, window shading devices, energy lock doors, sodium vapor lights, insulation, windmills, on-site waterpower systems, bioconversion systems, and

other energy efficient design methods and materials. Converting an existing power system to a more efficient system is also allowable.

Ineligible Projects

- Routine maintenance, which includes work and care for a site that should be conducted on a frequent basis in order to keep a park or recreation area in working order.
- Overhead costs that include regular operating expenses, such as equipment usage for routine maintenance, building rent and upkeep, utilities, insurance, and fixed costs associated with a business, agency, or group.
- Indirect costs, which typically represent the regular expenses of doing business. Only costs that are directly related to the awarded PSGP grant project are eligible while the project is actively open.
- Budget contingencies included as budget line items.
- Ceremonial or entertainment expenses or any other costs associated with opening or ribbon-cutting ceremonies.
- Publicity or promotional costs, such as brochures or other print materials, website development, etc.
- Equipment purchase, such as hammers, ladders, or lawn mowers.
- Interest expenses.

Open Project Selection Process (OPSP)

The NDPRD has developed an OPSP to assure equal opportunity of eligible project sponsors across the entire state. The OPSP utilizes the SCORP to identify priority recreation needs as selected by the residents of ND.

The NDPRD will publish all available PSGP application cycles and the application process on the Department Website and through press releases to inform all potential state and local applicants.

ND OPSP Priority Rating System

NDPRD has established a priority rating system for selecting eligible projects for funding based primarily on outdoor recreation needs identified in the SCORP. The scoresheet provides each applicant a fair and equitable assessment during competition to qualify for project funding.

The priority rating scoresheet is an evaluation of each project using a 100-point scale. Projects are evaluated based on the application received by the NDPRD and then scored individually by an advisory board of at least three members selected by the NDPRD. The project scores are averaged, and the packets are sent to the Director of the NDPRD for approval and award.

Points are awarded based on grant management/secured local funds, project details, and serving priority needs identified by regions in the current SCORP. Other considerations for awarding PSGP funds to projects include; the seasonal duration of the outdoor activity, providing new recreational opportunities to local communities, increased accessibility, and demonstrated support of the four pillars of the ND Main Street Initiative.

Recurring Funding Cycle

The NDPRD will conduct a recurring funding cycle for receiving, evaluating, and selecting project proposals each biennium if approval by the ND Legislative Body.

Local Contributions

A minimum total project cost of \$30,000 (or PSGP grant request of \$15,000) is required for consideration and project sponsors must have 50 percent of the total cost available (local share) at the time of application. The PSGP is a 50/50 cash match only grant. Grant recipients must utilize funding within 18 months of the award to ensure timely completion of the project and efficient use of the funds. NDPRD will reimburse the project sponsor up to 50 percent of the eligible project costs, with the remainder the responsibility of the local project sponsor.

Reimbursement

The project sponsor will not receive upfront funding at the time of project approval. Instead, the sponsor must pay the bills and be reimbursed for a maximum of 50% of the expenses incurred for the project.

As in any program where a reimbursement is requested for a portion of the project costs, adequate documentation and records are essential. There must be definite supporting documentation (i.e., invoices and canceled checks) for each item of cost claimed. Estimates are not sufficient and cannot be used for reimbursement purposes. NDPRD may request additional support documentation in order to process a billing.

Reimbursement Requests

The following is a list of documentation NDPRD will need to process reimbursement requests:

- SFN 59174 Grant Program Reimbursement Request Form.
- Contractor invoices (or final payment, if countersigned by contractor acknowledging payment of all prior charges, and if the cost of each major work item is shown) and cancelled checks to contractor
- Copies of invoices. Not monthly statements

Partial Billing - A partial bill along with supporting documentation may be submitted to NDPRD after portions of the work have been completed. The state will retain five percent (5%) of the grant amount

until the project is complete, and a final inspection completed. Supporting documentation as mentioned above is required.

Final Billing: For a project to be considered completed and ready for final billing, it should be submitted within thirty days of the completion of the project or grant expiration date, whichever comes first. Final project billings must be submitted to NDPRD utilizing the process outlined above. Final project billing and grant closeout will not be completed until NDPRD has conducted the final inspection and certified the project is indeed complete, meeting the project description outlined in the grant application and/or project amendment.

Progress Reports

Sponsor progress reports are due quarterly to the NDPRD utilizing the ND Web Grants program. Progress reports shall include:

- A list of the major work elements agreed to in the grant scope and a narrative description of the status of work for each, including actual or projected completion dates.
- Identification of any elements that are behind schedule and why.
- Estimated costs incurred during the billing period for each work item.
- Total costs incurred and total costs previously billed for all parts of the project to date

Amendments

Any changes to an approved grant agreement require an amendment be submitted from the sponsor to the NDPRD for approval. During the grant period, various situations may result in changes or deviations from the grant description. An amendment is necessary to add to or alter the approved project. Changes that may necessitate an amendment are increases or decreases in the grant amount, scope changes, or an extension of the project period.

Changes in Project Scope

Only those items approved for the grant are eligible for reimbursement. Facilities must be constructed in the same location as designated on the plans submitted with the application. Due to unforeseen changes in project costs, emergencies, or revisions in the plans for the facility, certain items may have to be added or deleted from the project after it is approved. In the case of adding an item to the project, construction on that item cannot begin until the amendment is approved.

The amount of state assistance specified on the grant award letter is the maximum amount reserved for that particular project. Costs over this amount shall be paid by the applicant. All changes in project scope should be in accordance with the intent of the original application and must be justifiable. The need for the change must be documented by a letter to the NDPRD, accompanied by revised cost estimates, construction plans, and maps.

Project Period Extensions:

All the submitted scope of work must take place within the project period, which is identified in the grant award letter. The award letter is sent to the project sponsor after the project has received approval. For most projects, the target date for project completion will be based on an 18-month project period. The project sponsor is encouraged to complete the project as soon as possible as inflation can increase the total project cost; as grants are not adjusted for inflation, any inflationary cost increases must be the responsibility of the project sponsor.

If the project cannot be completed during the period identified on the project letter, a request must be submitted for a time extension. The request must justify why the project cannot be completed before the expiration date. This justification should include a time schedule for completing the remaining items. Typically, no more than one six-month extension can be granted and then only under unforeseen circumstances. Work performed after the project has expired will not be eligible for reimbursement. Final payments for work done during the project period can be made after the project has expired. These payments should specify the work had been completed before the project expired.

Submission of an Amendment Request

The grant sponsor initiates the amendment by submitting a request for the changes to NDPRD. It is recommended that NDPRD be contacted prior to the submittal of the amendment request. Requests should include all project revisions desired, including cost estimates, maps or design plans, and justification of the need for the changes. Department staff will be able to provide advice on the feasibility of an amendment approval. An amendment for a change in scope can be requested any time prior to the beginning of work on the added item. An amendment for an extension of time should be submitted forty-five days before the grant is scheduled to expire.

It is essential that amendment requests be kept to a minimum. Amendments are used to cover items that could not be anticipated in the original project. Major deviations from the original grant application will not be accepted. It is the responsibility of the local sponsor to thoroughly determine the type of project and its feasibility, prior to submission and, upon approval, carry through with that proposal.

Grant Completion

Upon notification by the local sponsor that a project has been completed, NDPRD staff will conduct a final inspection. If the project has been completed in accord with the grant description, the final billing can be processed. In order for a project to be considered completed and ready for final billing, it should be submitted within thirty days of the completion of the grant or expiration date, whichever comes first.

Items required for grant close out will include, but may not be limited to:

- A final letter or report from the grantee attesting to the completion of the project in accordance with the approved project agreement/amendment.

- A final on-site inspection report prepared by NDPRD.
- Digital images of the completed project. Best images are those of people enjoying the new outdoor recreation resource. Images should be accompanied with a description and date taken.

Grant Termination

A local sponsor may request withdrawal of a grant at any time prior to the first payment or expenditure of grant funds. After the initial payment, the grant may be rescinded, modified, or amended only upon approval by NDPRD.

NDPRD may terminate a grant in whole or in part, at any time before the date of completion, if it is determined the local sponsor has failed to comply with the terms of the grant proposal or the intent of the program. Failure by the local sponsor to comply with the terms of the grant may cause suspension of all obligations and a return of any monies received. If a grant is terminated, the sponsor will be notified in writing of the determination and the reasons for the termination, together with the effective date. Payments made to the local sponsor or recovery of funds by the NDPRD under projects terminated for cause shall be in accord with the legal rights and liabilities of the parties.

NDPRD may terminate the grants in whole or in part at any time before the date of completion when both parties agree that the continuation of the grant would not produce beneficial results commensurate with the further expenditure of funds. The parties shall agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. The local sponsor shall not incur new obligations for the terminated portion after the effective date and shall cancel as many outstanding obligations as possible. Termination either for cause or for convenience requires the partially completed grant project in question be brought to a state of recreational usefulness agreed upon by the local sponsor and NDPRD, or all funds must be returned.

Post Completion and Stewardship

At the time of project approval, the local sponsor, through the acceptance of funds, commits that the facilities developed, renovated, or repair must remain open for general public use and will be operated and maintained.

Operation and Maintenance

Property acquired or developed with PSGP assistance shall be operated and maintained as follows:

- The property shall be maintained to appear attractive and inviting to the public.
- Sanitation and sanitary facilities shall be maintained in accordance with applicable healthstandards.
- Properties shall be kept open for public use with reasonable hours and times of the year, according to the type of area or facility.

- Properties shall be kept accessible and safe for public use. Fire prevention, lifeguard and similar activities shall be maintained for proper public safety.
- Buildings, roads, trails and other structures and improvements shall be kept in reasonable repair throughout their estimated lifetime to prevent undue deterioration and to encourage public use.
- An approved, PSGP acknowledgement sign shall remain displayed at the project site.