

FAQs

IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM



The Municipal Park Improvement Grant Program is a program of the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners. The Monmouth County Park System administers the program on behalf of the Commissioners. This Frequently Asked Questions Sheet has been prepared to answer basic questions about the program.

Who and what are eligible for program funding?

Monmouth County municipalities are the only eligible applicants. The governing body must adopt a resolution authorizing the application. Municipalities may submit only one application per funding cycle. Park improvement and development projects are eligible. Acquisitions are no longer eligible to apply for this program as of 2023. Please note that municipal acquisitions projects will be funded through a separate program. Please contact program staff for any information regarding municipal acquisitions.

How much money is available?

As of 2023, the Commissioners have allocated a total of \$6 million per year for the grant program. Monmouth County will fund up to 50% of eligible project costs. In state-designated Urban Aid Communities, the county will increase its maximum share to 75%. County funding is limited to \$500,000 per project.

What costs are eligible?

The direct cost of facility construction, demolition, renovation and/or stabilization are eligible for park improvement projects. No indirect or soft costs are eligible including, but not limited to, professional and in-kind services. Any costs incurred prior to the filing of the application are considered ineligible; the issuance of a purchase order or the award of a contract constitutes the incurrence of costs.

When is the application deadline?

The deadline for 2023 is 4 p.m. on Thursday, July 13.

How are projects selected for funding?

This is a competitive grant program. All applications are reviewed for conformance with the eligibility requirements and the project evaluation criteria (see the Program Manual for details). Applications for projects that diversify or expand recreation opportunities will be favored over applications that replace aged or substandard facilities or address issues of maintenance, and additional priority will be given to state-designated Urban Aid Communities and to projects located within state-designated Overburdened Communities.

What are the requirements for a public hearing?

A public hearing on the grant application must be held within a twelve (12) month period prior to filing of the application. Notice of the hearing must be published as a legal notice or display advertisement at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing in a newspaper providing local circulation in the municipality in which the project is located. The notice must state the time, place and purpose of the hearing and identify the project by name, street address, block and lot. An affidavit that the notice was published and a certified copy of the minutes from the public hearing must be included with the application for it to be considered complete and eligible for funding in the current funding cycle.

How soon must a town complete its project after the award of funding?

Once the project is selected for funding, the municipality has six months to execute a grant agreement with the county. The municipality must obtain the services of an environmental consultant and conduct a Preliminary Assessment and Site Inspection (PASI) of the property to identify any areas of concern before the grant agreement can be executed. The project must be completed within thirty (30) months of the application selection.

Can the project scope change after the application is selected for funding?

It is the philosophy of the county's program that the grant is funding a portion of a total project, whose scope is described in the grant agreement based on plans, cost estimates, and other statements included in the grant application. The program procedures provide for requests for minor changes in scope (see the Program Manual for details). No major changes are permitted, and all changes must be approved in advance in writing. Changes that negatively impact the fundamental merits of the project that resulted in its selection for funding will not be approved. Unauthorized changes may result in the loss of all or a portion of the county funding.

Can the project be developed in phases?

Municipalities have funded separate phases of park development projects under the grant program. Applicants should consider phasing larger projects, completing an initial phase under one round of grants, and seeking additional funding for subsequent phases under subsequent rounds. Project phasing must be proposed with the initial project proposal and subsequent grant applications are not guaranteed funding in subsequent rounds.

How can I get more information?

Questions and correspondence regarding the Monmouth County Municipal Open Space Grant Program should be addressed to the Monmouth County Park System, Acquisition and Design Office, Attn: Municipal Open Space Program, 805 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, NJ 07738, by telephone at 732-842-4000, ext. 4472, or by e-mail to municipal.grants@monmouthcountyparks.com. Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Administrator before beginning the application process; pre-application meetings can be scheduled.

Current information regarding the program, including a copy of the Program Policies and Procedures Manual, is posted on the Monmouth County Park System website, www.monmouthcountyparks.com, under the heading Municipal Open Space Grant Program or scan the below QR code for direct access to the webpage.



Thank you for your interest in the Municipal Park Improvement Grant Program!