



September 30th, 2024

To: Potential Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Applicants

It is with great pleasure that I announce our fourth round of the Park District of Ottawa County Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program. The Board of Park Commissioners has authorized the distribution of up to \$200,000 for 2025 program awards.

Applications must be submitted no later than **January 10th, 2025 at 4:30pm**. Please include documentation that clearly supports the estimated cost of proposed project. Applications must be e-mailed to jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org or dropped off at park headquarters (call or text (419) 707-4051 to schedule drop-off time). A grant panel will review the applications and make award recommendations to the Park Board. In reviewing the applications, the panel will consider priority projects, collaboration with current Park District project planning, conformance with application requirements, safety issues, cost/benefit ratio, maintenance, and population served. Grants must be for future purchases.

Funding will be distributed AFTER the project is completed and final report with proper documentation has been submitted, OR a signed service agreement and/or construction contract with final costs has been submitted and reviewed by Park District Executive Director. Entities requesting the distribution of funds by submitting a signed service agreement and/or construction contract must also complete a final report with proper documentation when the project is fully completed. An invoice from the Grantee to the Park District with the reimbursement amount of actual funds spent, or invoice with service agreement and/or construction contract amount, must be submitted in order to process check payments. All invoices to the Park District must be received by December 1st, 2025 in order to receive funding distributions from the 2025 grant cycle.

Failure to complete projects in a timely manner, failure to submit the required final report and failure to permanently display grant acknowledgment signs are all reasons to deny future funding requests.

An optional virtual grants meeting will be scheduled on October 17th at 10am. Preregistration will be required and the meeting link will be e-mailed early October. Should you have any questions, or if we can be of any assistance in the planning or implementation of your project, please feel free to call Executive Director, Jannah Wilson at 419-707-4051 or email jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org. The Board of Park Commissioners recognize the importance of forming partnerships to provide maximum outdoor recreation access and safety to all Ottawa County residents. We look forward to working with you to achieve increased and improved outdoor recreation opportunities for all.

Sincerely,
Jannah Wilson
Executive Director

**Park District of Ottawa County
Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program
“Connecting People, Places and Parks”**

Park District of Ottawa County Mission Statement:

The mission of the Park District of Ottawa County is to connect, enhance and protect the natural, scenic, environmental and cultural resources of Ottawa County for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

General Grant Information and Program Requirements

Funding for this Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program has been provided by the Park District of Ottawa County Board of Park Commissioners as a component of the Park District’s property tax levy. It was the consensus of the Board that a program of assistance to Ottawa County political subdivisions would increase benefits from tax dollars and provide greater access to outdoor recreation opportunities in Ottawa County.

Applicant Eligibility

Ottawa County political subdivisions of the State of Ohio (cities, villages, townships, county), Ottawa County public schools, and Ottawa County public libraries are eligible to apply for funding, provided the agency is partnering with a responsible agency or responsible for public outdoor recreation facilities, green spaces, and/or trails and is located all or part in Ottawa County. All projects must provide open public access. The Board, Council or other legislative body must pass a general resolution or ordinance indicating agreement for participation in the program and compliance with the terms of the program. An eligibility questionnaire must be completed and submitted every year by each subdivision/organization applying for grant funding.

Project Eligibility

The area for which grant funding is intended must be owned by or under long term lease (15-year lease or greater) to the entity applying for the grant. Grant awards are to be used for permanent improvements to public outdoor recreation spaces/facilities/trails or equipment to maintain spaces/facilities/trails. Grant funds are **NOT** to be utilized for staffing, operational, or administrative costs. Grant funding may be used for planning, public surveys, and engineering if the plans correlate with an outdoor recreation improvement on property owned or under long term lease to the entity applying for the grant. Grants for property acquisition may be considered and is at the discretion of the Park District of Ottawa County Board of Park Commissioners.

The goal of this grant program is to improve access to outdoor spaces, aid in the development of active transportation routes to parks and points of interest, and bolster public outdoor recreation opportunities within Ottawa County. The awards will be made on the basis of conformance with program requirements, connectivity, safety issues, cost/benefit ratio, maintenance and operational history.

Grant applications will be reviewed by a grant panel composed of local professionals and community members. The Grant Panel will utilize a scoring system along with a panel discussion in order to determine recommended funding amounts. For your information, the scoring rubric is attached to this application. The grant panel will make a funding recommendation to the PDOC Board of Park Commissioners who will make a final determination on grant funding allocations. Decisions of the Board of Park Commissioners with regard to project approval may not be appealed.

Funding Information

Program funding is determined by the Park Board on an annual basis. The Board of Park Commissioners has authorized the distribution of up to \$200,000 for 2025 program awards. Applicants may apply for projects up to \$50,000.00. **One application per entity per funding cycle.**

A commitment to project cost sharing is not required but encouraged. Applications with cost sharing will receive additional points on the scoring rubric.

Funding will be distributed AFTER the project is completed and final report with proper documentation has been submitted, OR a signed service agreement and/or construction contract with final costs has been submitted and reviewed by Park District Executive Director. Entities requesting the distribution of funds by submitting a signed service agreement and/or construction contract must also complete a final report with proper documentation when the project is fully completed.

Compliance with Federal, State and Local Laws

Federal, state and local laws pertaining to non-discrimination, Ohio and federal minimum wage legislation, prevailing wage thresholds, bidding requirements, building codes, zoning, health regulations, conflict of interest rules and related regulations must be met at all times. Compliance with these requirements, as applicable, remain the responsibility of the recipient of the grant funds.

If applying for playground equipment, the equipment **must** be IPEMA Certified (International Playground Equipment Manufacturers' Association, www.ipema.org) and follow the Consumer Product Safety Commission safety checklist - <https://www.cpsc.gov/safety-education/safety-guides/playgrounds/public-playground-safety-checklist>

Trail Projects – Trail signage with emergency services information should be considered as part of the trail plan. Literacy themed trails should include a letter of support from a partnering local public library.

Variance in Project Scope

Any variance in the scope of the original project must be approved by the Board of Park Commissioners. Variances include cost, project completion timeline, engineering and design modifications, and project extensions. Communicate all variances in writing to Park District Executive Director for variance board resolutions.

Additional Requirements

Upon receiving grant award letter, recipients will be required to attend a scheduled in-person grant meeting with Park District Executive Director and submit completed grant contract (grant contract form will be attached to grant award letter). Grant contracts will be signed by the Park District of Ottawa County Executive Director and a signed copy will be scanned and e-mailed back to recipient. Projects may not commence until the grant contract is fully signed.

Recipients must maintain a sign posted near or at the grant improvement(s), which identifies the area as having benefited from the Park District of Ottawa County Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program. Signage will be provided by the Park District. Projects which have received grant funding must be open and accessible to the general public. Fees charged (if any) for use of improved facilities may not substantially penalize non-residents.

Funding will be distributed AFTER the project is completed and final report with proper documentation has been submitted, OR a signed service agreement and/or construction contract with final costs has submitted and reviewed by Park District Executive Director. Entities requesting the distribution of funds by submitting a signed service agreement

and/or construction contract must also complete a final report with proper documentation when the project is fully completed. An invoice from the Grantee to the Park District with the reimbursement amount of actual funds spent, or invoice with service agreement and/or construction contract amount, must be submitted in order to process check payments. All invoices to the Park District must be received by December 1st, 2025 in order to receive funding distributions from the 2025 grant cycle. The final report shall include all costs associated with the project and have associated paid invoices. Within the final project report, entities are required to attach at least three photos and one 200-word article showcasing the completed project. The Park District of Ottawa County will have rights to use this report to publicize the use of our levy money in our publications, on social media and as desired.

Failure to complete projects in a timely manner, failure to submit the required final report and failure to permanently display grant acknowledgment signs are all reasons to deny future funding requests. Reimbursement will be made for actual funds used only and not exceeding the awarded amount.

Any questions regarding the Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program should be directed to PDOC Executive Director Jannah Wilson at 419-707-4051, or by e-mail at jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org.

2025 PDOC Parks and Trails Grant Timeline (Updated 7/8/2024)

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

September 30th, 2024 - Grant Application Opens

October 17th, 2024 - 10am, Virtual Grants Meeting

January 10th, 2025, 4:30pm - Grant Applications Due (e-mail to jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org)

January 20th-24th, 2025 - Grant Judging, Funding Recommendations to Park Board

February 11th, 2025 - Park Board Approves Grants and Funding Amounts

February 14th, 2025 - Grant Award Letters and Contracts E-mailed

March 3rd, 2025 - Contracts Due (work cannot begin until signed contract has been received)

December 1st, 2025 - All invoices for funds distribution from the 2025 grant cycle must be submitted along with proper documentation

* Submit project final report with proper documentation and invoice from Grantee to Park District for reimbursement of expended funds up to awarded amount.

OR

* Submit a signed service agreement and/or construction contract with final costs and invoice from Grantee to Park District for the distribution of final costs up to awarded amount. Final report and proper documentation with copies of paid invoices will be required when project is fully completed.

**Park District of Ottawa County
Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program
Application Checklist**

2025 IMPORTANT DATES:

GRANTS DUE JANUARY 10th, 4:30PM

GRANTS AWARDED FEBRUARY 14TH

ALL PAPERWORK FOR 2025 GRANT FUNDS DISTRIBUTION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 4:30PM ON DECEMBER 1st, 2025

This checklist has been developed to assist you in the completion of your application. This form does not need to be attached to your application.

FORMS TO SUBMIT FOR APPLICATION:

_____ Project Application; include statement of whether request is for a cost-sharing grant. If cost-sharing, both total cost of project and grant amount requested must be included.

_____ Applicant Eligibility Form (Annually)

_____ Resolution of Participation (Annually)

_____ Proof of Project site area ownership, lease or management agreement

_____ Project Cost Justification: (i.e.: contractor price quote, supplier price quote, copy of equipment supply catalog)

FORMS TO SUBMIT AFTER PROJECT COMPLETION:

_____ Final Report Form and invoice to Park District with actual funds spent for reimbursement

_____ 200-word article

_____ A minimum of 3 high resolution digital photos of project

Grant signage provided by the Park District must be mounted in place before grant project will be considered complete. Sites will be audited to insure signs have been placed. Signs will be provided by the Park District of Ottawa County. Please contact the Park District if you have alternate sign plans.

**Park District of Ottawa County
Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program
PROJECT APPLICATION 2025**

The deadline for returning completed application forms is **January 10th, 2025**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for grant awards. E-mail applications to jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org. For more information, contact Jannah Wilson at (419) 707-4051.

Political Subdivision _____

Contact Person _____

Mailing Address _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone _____

Name and Location of Park, Facility or Public Space _____

Brief Description of Project (include whether request is for a cost-sharing grant):

Brief Description of Project Timeline:

Letters of support are highly recommended if project includes multiple community partners. Please list letters of support and attach supporting documents.

How will the project fit into existing Park or Facility plans? How has your agency gathered community support for the project (surveys, public meetings, feedback at community events, signatures of support, etc)?

Cost Analysis of Project

Cost Analysis of Project:

Item Description

Cost Estimate

Labor

\$ _____

Materials

\$ _____

Equipment

\$ _____

Contracted Services

\$ _____

Other

\$ _____

PROJECT TOTAL

\$ _____

Grant Amount Requested:

\$ _____

Grant Cost Share (amount paid by applying entity):

\$ _____

(Grant amount requested and grant cost share should equal total amount for project.)

***How would you proceed with the project if you receive partial funding?**

Please **attach proof of ownership of project site area**, or, if your agency does not own the project area, please **attach a copy** of the lease or other management documents pertaining to this site and its related development(s). Please **attach cost justification documentation** i.e.: contactors quote, supplier quote, copy of catalog page with cost.

Park District of Ottawa County
2025 Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program
RESOLUTION # _____

(Applicant)

RE: Resolution Agreeing to Cooperate for the Purpose of Providing Outdoor Recreation Improvements

WHEREAS,

(Governing Body of the Applicant)

desires to utilize funding available through the 2025 Park District of Ottawa County Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that

1. _____
(Governing Body of Applicant)

agrees to cooperate for the purposes of increasing and improving outdoor recreation opportunities under the terms and conditions of the "2025 Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program" administered by the Park District of Ottawa County Board of Park Commissioners.

2. _____, _____ is hereby authorized to apply
(Title)

to the Park District of Ottawa County Board of Park Commissioners for funding assistance from the "2025 Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program".

3. this resolution was presented and acted upon at an open/public meeting of

(Governing Body of Applicant)

held on _____ in accordance with Ohio Open Meeting Laws.
(Date)

GOVERNING BODY OF APPLICANT AGENCY

Chairman, Mayor, President, etc.

Other Official

Other Official

**Park District of Ottawa County
Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program
Applicant Eligibility Form**

This application will be used to determine if the applicant organization is eligible to receive funding according to the laws of the State of Ohio and the Park District grant program guidelines. An updated Applicant Eligibility Information form should be completed and submitted with each application packet.

Agency/Political Subdivision _____

Governing Body _____
(Council, Mayor, Board of Trustees, Commissioners, etc.)

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Mailing Address _____

Daytime Telephone Number _____ E-mail _____

Park and Recreation Information: (Please use last page if additional space is needed)

How are capital projects currently funded? _____

Total budget for (current budget year) \$ _____

How are your maintenance and programming currently being accomplished and funded?

Please provide a list of your facilities/recreational areas: _____

Additional Information:

**Park District of Ottawa County
Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Program
Grant Recipient – Final Report**

In accordance with a request from the State of Ohio Auditor’s Office, please complete this form and return it to the Park District Office at the conclusion of your project.

Agency _____

Governing Body _____
(City Council, Mayor, Trustees, etc.)

Contact Person _____ Title _____

***** (Official address of the Governing body where the check will be sent.)

Address _____
Street City Zip

Telephone _____

E-mail Address _____

Project Title _____

Starting Date _____ Completion Date _____

Project Costs:

Labor _____

Materials/Equipment _____

Contract Services _____

Other _____

Total Project Expenses _____

Grant Amount Awarded: _____

Agency Cost Share Amount: _____

Attach copies of all documentation and paid invoices. Also attach invoice with grant reimbursement amount (reimbursement for expended funds only) for check processing. Send documentation and payment invoice (from Grantee to Park District) to:

jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org

Please submit 200-word article and 3 digital photos of the project to Jannah Wilson jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org

Park District of Ottawa County

Parks and Trails Improvement Grant Evaluation

(Form used to score applications – for information only.)

Evaluator: _____

Date: _____

Project Number: _____

Project Name: _____

Is the application complete? Y___ N___

Application Eligibility Information Form: Y___ N___

 Proof of ownership, lease, management: Y___ N___

 Cost Justification documents: Y___ N___

Is applicant eligible? Y___ N___

Is there project cost sharing? Y___ N___

Are there other sources of grant funding available for this project? Y___ N___

Scoring (1 low, 5 high)

Does the project provide improved access and/or connectivity to an outdoor area? 1 2 3 4 5

Cost/benefit (is it worth the \$) 1 2 3 4 5

Is the project sustainable? Is there an operations and maintenance plan? 1 2 3 4 5

Does the project contribute to community need and/or safety improvements? 1 2 3 4 5

Does the project showcase collaboration and creativity? 1 2 3 4 5

Score: _____

Extra Points for Cost Share– 5-15% 1 point, 16-25% 2 points, 26-35% 3 points, 36-45% 4 points, 45-55% 5 points

Extra Points: _____

Comments:
