

Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, Outdoor Recreation Grants Program (ORGP)

Overview: Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism's FUN Park Grant program administers grants for the development of public outdoor recreation facilities. These grants, which do not require a cash match by the grantee, are available to incorporated municipalities with populations of 2,500 or less and to unincorporated communities sponsored by the county. The program was created for these smaller communities that are often unable to take advantage of the Department's Matching Grant Program due to a required 50% match by the grantee. FUN Park Grants are funded through a portion of the Arkansas Real Estate Transfer Tax.

Application Cycle: Application submittal deadlines are published annually in application guide.

Notification: Information relating to the grant program will be provided to all eligible municipalities and counties annually and will be posted on ORGP website www.outdoorgrants.com.

Eligibility: Only incorporated municipalities with populations of 2,500 or less and unincorporated communities sponsored by the county are eligible for a FUN Park grant. Grantees will not be eligible to apply for future FUN Park grants within five years after they have received an award.

Grant Amount: Grant amounts and number of grants that may be awarded annually is published in the FUN Park Grant application guide.

Site Visits: Applicants must schedule a site visit with ORGP to provide applicant technical assistance on facility layout, verify site is appropriate for park development, and verify applicant's eligibility for a FUN Park grant.

Site Requirements: Applicant must own or have at least a 25-year lease on the real estate proposed for outdoor recreation development. Site must be suitable for the proposed development and available to all citizens at all reasonable times.

Eligible Facilities: Any fixed outdoor recreation facility may be funded with FUN Park grants. FUN Park grant funding may not be used for land acquisition, movable equipment, or recreation programming.

Cost Estimates: Applicant must provide cost estimates for all facilities included in their application.

Accessibility: All facilities funded by through the FUN Park Grant program must conform with accessibility guidelines established by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Playground Safety: All playground facilities funded by the FUN Park Grant program must conform with playground safety guidelines established by Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

Architectural and Engineering (A/E) Services; Grant Administration: The professional services of a licensed architect or engineer are required to oversee design, bidding and construction of grant project.

Selection Process: Applications are considered by a Grants Advisory Committee whose members are appointed by the Governor. Committee recommendations are forwarded to the Department's Executive Director for review.

Contract: ORGP will prepare a contract identifying facilities that may be developed with grant funding once a grant is awarded. Grantee may begin development only after the contract is signed by the mayor or county judge and the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism Executive Director.

Release of Funds: Grant funds will be released to grantee only after a contract is signed by the mayor or county judge and by the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism Executive Director. Grantee may be required to return funds to the Department if development has not begun within one year of contract.

Procurement: Grantee is responsible for following procurement laws applicable to their jurisdiction.

Financial Records: Grantee is responsible for maintaining all financial records pertaining to the grant project and providing ORGP copies of invoices and cancelled checks or other proof of payment verifying that all grant funds have been spent on eligible costs.