

Application scoring criteria

The scoring criteria the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management staff uses for the Michigan Spark Grants program were developed with input from the advisory group to ensure the program's stated objectives are met. In the event that multiple proposed projects receive the same total score, the DNR will use past per-capita grant assistance amount to prioritize the proposed projects.

April 2023 update: Based upon the number of applications received in fall 2022 and concurrent efforts within other open recreational grant programs in 2023, staff ability to provide specific guidance will be limited. Information and feedback based upon the evaluation of the 2022 application round of Spark are noted in italics after each question.

| Scoring categories | Points per section |
|---|--------------------|
| Public benefit and anticipated outcomes | 24 |
| Access to project site | 17 |
| Financial and social considerations | 19 |
| Clarity of scope and ability to execute | 14 |
| Access to new opportunities for people of all abilities | 15 |
| New construction, renovation and future maintenance | 11 |
| Total | 100 |

Applicant information

The applicant information page hosts a series of standardized questions regarding the applicant's organization and site control. Many of the fields will automatically populate when the application is initiated. Please verify the information is correct and click SAVE to save the changes. All required fields are marked with an *.

- Name of applicant (jurisdiction)*
- Unique entity identifier*
 - Required in the 2023 round and must be edited in the Organization Profile in MiGrants
- SIGMA vendor number* and SIGMA address ID*
 - Required in the 2023 round and must be edited in the Organization Profile in MiGrants
- Organization type*
 - Select one:
 - Local unit of government
 - Public recreation authority
 - Regional/statewide organization
 - Consortium of local governments
 - Other – narrative text will appear
- Name of authorized official, AO title*
- Address, city, state, ZIP code, county, phone, email*
- Michigan House district, Michigan Senate district, U.S. Congress district*

- Proposal title*
- Address of site; city, village or township of site, ZIP code*
- County (drop-down list)*

Site control

- What is/will be the applicant's type of ownership and control of the property?*
- Select the appropriate box for the applicant's site control at the project site. **Both the Documentation of Site Control form (PR5750-4) and deed, lease or easement is required** to be uploaded in the required attachments section of the application.
- Latitude/longitude at park entrance*

Narrative details – Part 1

Additional information: Each narrative section will include the primary scoring questions and non-scored questions. Non-scored criteria are added to the application to provide the DNR with additional opportunities to improve DNR processes and identify the needs of our stakeholders to better serve the public.

- Park name:*
- Is this an existing park?* If yes, please explain what features currently exist at the park.:
- If you are submitting multiple Spark grant applications, what is the priority for this application?*
- Proposal description: What do you want to do?*

Public benefit and anticipated outcomes = 24 maximum points

- How was the community negatively affected by COVID? How does this project address that?* Total points possible: **10**
 - *Provide community specific information.*
- How will this project contribute to strong, healthy communities that promote health and safety?* Total points possible: **8**
 - *Focus on the project impacts.*
- What kind of stakeholder and community input did you have?* Total points possible: **4**
- Please provide examples of documented stakeholder and community input (including letters of support). **Not scored**
 - *Please provide design input regarding project accessibility under the scoring category for "Access to new opportunities for people of all abilities" next to the appropriate group.*
- While not a requirement for funding, is this project part of a community recreation or capital improvement plan?* **Not scored**
- Certified resolution from highest governing body* uploaded Total points possible: **2**
 - *You must include a signed and certified copy of the resolution in the Spark grant application. The resolution language must include:*
 - *Project name*
 - *Park name*
 - *Amount requested from the Spark program*
 - *If applicable, additional funding sources and amounts*
 - *Signed and certified*

Access to the project site = 17 maximum points

- Based on the geographic location of the proposed project, the DNR will determine what portion of the community's population will be within 0.5 miles of the project site. Total points possible: **7**
- How will the public reasonably access the project site? Select all that apply.* **1 point per selection; up to 7 points**
 - Vehicle
 - Sidewalk
 - Bike
 - Dial-a-ride
 - Bus stop within 0.25 miles
 - Boat/kayak
 - Trail
 - Other (text box appears if selected)
 - *Modes of transportation (e.g., skateboard, scooter) using the same access are not awarded additional points.*
- What programs and partnerships currently exist that bring people to your project and activate the space?* Example – summer camp, farmers market, music in the park, etc. Total points possible: **3**

Financial and social considerations = 19 maximum points

- Household income, park density, physical and mental health are all important attributes of a strong, healthy community and the basis for the social and financial scoring section. The DNR will score this section based on statewide available data and the geographical location of the proposed project.

Narrative details – Part 2

Clarity of scope and ability to execute = 14 maximum points

- Provide your target dates for the following project milestones.* Total points possible: **10**

| Milestone | Target completion date | Description of timeline |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Public input | | |
| Planning and design | | |
| Bidding and contract execution | | |
| Construction | | |
| Programming and activation | | |

- *Completion dates are requested, not the start date.*
- Conceptual site development plan is required (upload).* **Not scored'**
- Do you have a licensed landscape architect, engineer or architect under contract or on staff for this project?* **Not scored**

- Choose: Yes/No
 - If yes, please provide their name and explain the competitive selection process to retain them.

Are construction plans and specifications available?*

Choose: Yes/No – If yes, upload required.

- Are federal, state and/or local permits required for the project?* Total points possible: **4**
 - Choose: Yes/No – If yes, provide the following information in the chart below.
Status options are:
 - Initial consultation (either formal or informal)
 - Applied/pending decision
 - Approved
 - *Local permits (e.g., soil erosion, building permits) should be included.*

Efforts taken to obtain or determine permits

| Type of permit | Permitting agency | Requirements | Status |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------|--------|
| | | | |

- Is there any evidence of environmental contamination within the project area?* **Not scored**
 - If yes, describe how the contamination has been addressed.
- Select all of the following project partners or support staff. **Not scored**

| X | Type of partner | Contact name | Description |
|---|------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | Local government staff | | |
| | Nonprofit organization/group | | |
| | Community foundation | | |
| | Regional planning agency | | |
| | Volunteer | | |
| | Friends group | | |
| | State or federal agency | | |
| | Land conservancy | | |
| | Other | | |

Access to new opportunities for people of all abilities = 15 maximum points

- Please select what groups you have received feedback from and upload the associated support documentation. Total points possible: **5**

| X | Groups for feedback | Upload box |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------|
| | Center for independent living | |
| | Center for assisted living | |
| | Local or regional disability network | |
| | Physical or recreational therapist | |
| | Individual | |
| | Formal group or organization | |
| | Other | |

- *Please provide design review(s) of your project.*
- What specific features make your project unique and can clearly show that input from the above groups has been incorporated?* Total points possible: **10**
 - *Explain how your project incorporates universal and/or inclusive design principles.*

New construction, renovation and future maintenance = 11 maximum points

Please do not include mobilization, site work, etc., in the scope list. Total points possible: **7**

- Is new construction part of your project?* Choose: Yes/No
 - If yes, please identify the major components of your construction project.

| Scope list | Brief description |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Limited drop-down list | 200-character limit |

- Is this renovation (replace with the same scope item) or redevelopment (change of use with similar footprint) part of your project?* Choose: Yes/No
 - If yes, please identify the major components of your construction project.
 - Age (in years) of existing item (0-10 years, 10-20 years, 20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40+ years)

| Scope list | Brief description | Age (in years) of existing item |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Limited drop-down list | 200-character limit | Drop-down list |

- What mechanisms and resources are in place to maintain this investment? Please check all that apply.* **Not scored**
 - General fund support for parks and recreation
 - Millage
 - Endowment fund
 - Grants
 - Friends group
 - Dedicated parks and recreation staffing
 - None of the above
 - Other
- Based upon the existing mechanisms and resources, how long could you maintain this investment?* **Not scored**
- Describe the selection of materials, the way the project is designed, and other features that make it sustainable.* Total points possible: **2**
 - *Describe environmentally friendly features are incorporated into the project.*
- What design features or considerations in your project reduce long-term maintenance?* Total points possible: **2**

Financial details

| Budget categories | Need for project?* | Total cost |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| Preplanning – Only includes conceptual designs, public input, public surveys and other meetings. | Choose: Yes/No | Currency box |
| Administration – Internal activities necessary to support the oversight and implementation of the project. This category is capped at 5% of the project subtotal. | Choose: Yes/No | Currency box |
| Project permitting, plan designs and oversight – This category is capped at 25% of the project subtotal. | Choose: Yes/No | Currency box |
| Construction | Choose: Yes/No | Currency box |
| Programming | Choose: Yes/No | Currency box |
| Equipment – directly related to activities supporting the construction improvements of the project; maintenance equipment is not eligible. | Choose: Yes/No | Currency box |
| Subtotal | | Currency box |

This program does permit the use of funds to cover indirect costs. Do you want to include indirect costs in this project?*

- Choose: Yes/No

If yes, does your organization have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement?

- Choose: Yes/No
 - If yes,
 - Upload the negotiated indirect cost rate documentation
 - Response: Indirect rate: fill in %
 - If no, the maximum indirect rate is 10%.
 - Response: Indirect rate: fill in %

| Budget categories | Total cost |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Indirect rate | % |
| Grant amount requested* | Currency box |
| Budget total | Currency box |

- Does this project have match funding? Choose: Yes/No

| Budget categories | Total cost |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Total match | Currency box |
| Total project cost | Currency box |

Funding in excess of Spark Grant request

Note: Additional questions will be populated to determine the funding agency, contact information, status and amounts requested. Documentation of match is required.

| Funding source | Amount |
|--|--------------|
| General funds or local restricted funds (applicant's own cash). No American Rescue Plan Act Funds. | Currency box |
| Force account labor/materials (applicant's own paid labor or materials) | Currency box |
| Federal or state funds (other than Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund) | Currency box |
| Cash donations | Currency box |
| Donated labor and/or materials | Currency box |
| Maintenance – Funding identified is based upon possible need to help support maintaining the project. Please note that the Spark grant does not allow for ongoing maintenance; however, the DNR may use this information to help align additional funding opportunities. | Currency box |

Additional information

- Provide additional information relevant to the project, such as relationship to other grants applied for or received, changes since last submission, or other details that may affect the scope or review process. Address any overlap or duplication between the proposed project and any other active or anticipated project in terms of activities, costs or the commitment of key personnel.
 - 1,500-character limit narrative
 - Upload box
- *2022 applications that are resubmitted in 2023 may provide additional information herein. Additional narrative information is limited to the character count in the narrative text box. Attachments with additional narrative text may not be considered in the evaluation.*

Certification

The authorized official will be required to check the boxes to certify the statements below and save the page.

- By saving this page, I certify that I am a designated official for the applicant and that all statements on this application and the attachment hereto are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- I understand that if funded, all funds must be obligated into third-party contract by Dec. 31, 2024.
- I understand that if funded, this project will need to be fully expended and completed by Oct. 31, 2026.

DNR scoring

| 1. Public benefit and anticipated outcomes | Score |
|--|--------------|
| 1a. How was the community negatively affected by COVID? How does this project address that? (maximum 10 points) | 10 |
| 1b. How will this project contribute to strong, healthy communities that promote health and safety? (maximum 8 points) | 8 |
| 1c. What kind of stakeholder and community input did you have? (maximum 4 points) | 4 |
| 1d. Certified resolution from the highest governing body (maximum 2 Points) | 2 |
| Section 1 score (maximum 24 points) | 24 |

DNR comments

| 2. Access to project site | Score |
|--|--------------|
| 2a. Access to the project site: Based upon the geographic location of the proposed project or park entrance, the DNR will determine recreation space per capita. (maximum 7 points) | 7 |
| 2b. How will the public reasonably access the project site. (maximum 7 points) | 7 |
| 2c. What programs and partnerships currently exist that bring people to your project and activate the space? Example – summer camp, farmers market, music in the park, etc. (maximum 3 points) | 3 |
| Section 2 score (maximum 17 points) | 17 |

DNR comments

| 3. Financial and social considerations | Score |
|--|--------------|
| Household income, park density and health are all important attributes of a strong, healthy community and the basis for the social and financial scoring section. DNR will score this section based on statewide available data and the geographical location of the proposed project. | 19 |
| Section 3 score (maximum 19 points) | 19 |

DNR comments

| 4. Clarity of scope and ability to execute | Score |
|---|--------------|
| 4a. Provide your targeted dates for the following project milestones. (maximum 10 points) | 10 |
| 4b. Are federal, state and/or local permits required for the project? (maximum 4 points) | 4 |
| Section 4 score (maximum 14 points) | 14 |

DNR comments

| 5. Access to new opportunities for people of all abilities | Score |
|--|--------------|
| 5a. Please select what groups you have received feedback from and upload the associated support documentation (letters, plan review comments, testimonials, etc.) (maximum 5 points) | 0, 3, 5 |
| 5b. What specific features make your project unique and can clearly show that input from the above groups has been incorporated? (maximum 10 points) | 0, 5, 10 |
| Section 5 score (maximum 15 points) | 15 |

DNR comments

| 6. New construction, renovation and long-term maintenance | Score |
|---|--------------|
| 6a1 and 6a2. What type of scope is included for the project? (maximum 7 points) | 7 |
| 6b. Describe the selection of materials, the way the project is designed, and other features that make it sustainable. (maximum 2 points) | 2 |
| 6c. What design features or considerations in your project reduce long-term maintenance? (maximum 2 points) | 2 |
| Section 6 score (maximum 11 points) | 11 |

DNR comments

| | |
|---|------------|
| Total score (maximum 100 points) | 100 |
|---|------------|