

**Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
County Fairs Capital Improvement Grant Program
For Fiscal Year 2025**

Purpose

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is offering this grant opportunity to county fairs. This program will assist in the promotion of building improvements or other capital improvements at county fairgrounds within the state. Total funding available for this grant program is \$1,580,000 for fiscal year 2025.

Capital improvements are costs related to making changes to improve capital assets, increase their useful life, or add to the value of these assets. Capital improvements may be structural improvements or other renovations to a building or enhance usefulness or productivity.

Building improvements are costs related to making changes to improve buildings which are used for fair purposes and are owned by the fair association or political subdivision. These improvements will extend the useful life of the building.

Schedule

The grant program will adhere to the following timeline:

Grant Proposals due:	March 14, 2025, 5:00 PM
Announcement of Recipients:	Early May, 2025
Project/Program Duration:	May, 2025 through August 31, 2026
Interim Reports Due:	September 15, 2025
Final Reports Due:	September 15, 2026

Eligibility Requirements

- Fairs incorporated under Act 80 of 1855 – Local Agricultural or Horticultural Society.
- County-owned and operated fairs operating under Act 11 of 1929.
- County fairs that have submitted all required year-end reports for the prior three years.
- Fair Associations leasing their grounds must have a minimum of a **five-year lease** for the use of the grounds to hold the annual fair and other non-fair events.
- Fairs that did not receive a competitive capital improvement grant in the previous grant cycle.

Funding Availability

This is a cost reimbursement grant and must have a 50% cash match. In-kind services cannot be used to meet the match. Grants will be awarded a minimum of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$100,000. **Example** - if the total cost of the capital improvement project is \$45,000, the fair can apply for a grant in the amount of \$30,000 and the match required for the fair would be \$15,000.

Limit of one project and proposal per fair association.

Reports

Interim and final reporting dates will be identified in the final grant document.

Performance Metric Reporting Requirement

A report on the financial impact resulting from the capital improvement project on both the fair and non-fair events held on the fairgrounds will be due three years after the completion of the capital improvement at the fairgrounds.

Procedure for Submission of a Proposal

Complete the enclosed application form and use the prescribed format to complete a grant request. All grant proposals shall be submitted electronically to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as defined in the timeline. Proposals shall be emailed to Tracy Ebels at: MDARD-Fairs@michigan.gov

2025 Grant format will be limited to the new grant application format.

Scoring Criteria

Category	Possible Points	Category Weight
Project Purpose - How well is the need defined, how it will be used and the level of importance, including Accessibility, Inclusivity, and Capital Improvements.	15	21%
Expected Measurable Outcomes - Goals and Objectives of the projects (metrics).	15	21%
Budget - Detail and quality of the budget submitted.	15	21%
Potential Impact - To Fair events, non-fair events, and the next five years of operations.	10	14%
Work plan - how will the project be completed and will it meet needs.	10	14%
Sustainability - the lasting benefits of the project.	5	7%
Total	70	100%