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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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METRO EAST PARK AND RECREATION DISTRICT UNVEILS FY 2025 GRANT CYCLE OFFERING \$3.4 MILLION IN FUNDING FOR LOCAL PARKS, TRAILS

MADISON AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES, IL –The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) is pleased to announce the debut of its FY 2025 grant cycle, offering a total of \$3.4 million in funding to support the development and enhancement of public parks, trails and recreation facilities in Madison and St. Clair Counties, Illinois.

Available grant opportunities under the FY 2025 cycle include:

- Park and Trail Grant Program (\$3M)
- Community Planning Grant Program (\$400K)
- Event Sponsorship Grant Program (\$30K)

Applications will be accepted starting July 10, 2024, and awarded on an ongoing basis until May 30, 2025, or until funds are depleted.

"We are thrilled to continue supporting the expansion and enhancement of recreational spaces and active transportation in our region," said Cole Preston, MEPRD Grant Coordinator. "These grants play a crucial role in fostering vibrant, healthy communities by improving access to parks and trails and continually adding and enhancing recreation opportunities that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities."

Since its formation in 2000, MEPRD has committed more than \$40 million to support a total of 275 local projects across Madison and St. Clair Counties. This includes 63 ongoing and 212 completed projects. These grants are pivotal in advancing MEPRD's mission to develop and maintain a public system of interconnecting parks and trails throughout its jurisdiction, by partnering with local communities, agencies, and organization, which, in turn, benefits local communities and bolsters recreational opportunities across the Metro East region.

Sugar Loaf Township Park North, a park project completed by Sugar Loaf Township in 2023, stands as a testament to the impact of MEPRD grants. The project received \$25,845 in Park and Trail Grant funding from MEPRD and transformed an undeveloped parcel of land just outside of Dupu, IL into a

neighborhood park. This park features a looped walking path and a new playground, providing nearby underserved neighborhoods with direct access to green space for respite and recreation.

MEPRD encourages all eligible agencies and organizations in Madison and St. Clair Counties to visit meprd.org/funding to learn more and apply. Let's work together to build a healthier, more connected, and more vibrant Metro East!

MEPRD FY 2025 Grant Programs Overview

Park and Trail Grant Program

The MEPRD Park and Trail Grant Program (FY 2025) provides funding for the acquisition, development, and improvement of public parks, trails, and recreation facilities. Eligible applicants include municipalities, townships, counties, park districts, transit districts, universities, and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations within Madison and St. Clair Counties. To learn more and apply, visit: meprd.org/park-trail-grant.

- Total Program Budget: \$3,000,000
- Grant Award: Up to \$150,000 or 40% of eligible costs for *park projects and other non-trail projects*; or Up to \$300,000 or 40% of eligible costs for qualifying *trail projects*.
- Application Submittal: July 10, 2024, at 7:30 a.m. – May 30, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.; or until program funds are depleted, whichever occurs first.
- Required Cost Share: 50% of MEPRD's grant award (25% for rural/economically distressed areas)

Community Planning Grant Program

The MEPRD Community Planning Grant Program (FY 2025) supports community-wide master planning for parks and/or bicycle-pedestrian infrastructure within Madison and St. Clair Counties. To learn more and apply, visit: meprd.org/planning-grant.

- Total Program Budget: \$400,000
- Grant Award: Up to \$40,000 or 40% of eligible costs, whichever is less
- Application Submittal: July 10, 2024, at 7:30 a.m. – May 30, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.; or until program funds are depleted, whichever occurs first.
- Required Cost Share: 60% of the total project cost must come from other sources (e.g. project sponsor, public or private funds or grants from others, or any combination thereof).

Event Sponsorship Grant Program

The MEPRD Community Planning Grant Program (FY 2025) supports public events that make use of, or promote the use of, public parks or trails in Madison and St. Clair Counties, IL. To learn more and apply, visit: meprd.org/event-sponsorship.

- Total Program Budget: \$30,000
- Grant Award: Up to \$2,500 or 40% of eligible event costs, whichever is less (for both public organizations and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations).
- Application Submittal: July 10, 2024, at 7:30 a.m. – May 30, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.; or until program funds are depleted, whichever occurs first.
- Eligible Events: Eligible events include those involving physical activity (e.g., walking/biking events, biathlons, etc.), as well as events that provide a public benefit to protecting, preserving, or restoring the natural environment and/or local wildlife within public parks, green space, greenways, nature preserves, wetlands, etc. in the Metro East (e.g., educational and volunteer events).

How to Apply

All FY25 grant applications will be available on the MEPRD website starting July 10, 2024. Eligible applicants can receive up to one award per program per fiscal year. Applications are reviewed and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information on each grant program and to apply, please visit meprd.org/funding.

For grant support/questions, please contact MEPRD Grant Coordinator Cole Preston at (618) 346-4905 or by email to cpreston@meprd.org.

MEPRD encourages you to visit your local park or trail and take a moment to appreciate the value it adds to your life and those around you. To see a full list of the ongoing and completed projects funded in part by MEPRD, go to: www.meprd.org/projects.

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The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) was established by the voters of Madison and St. Clair Counties, Illinois, in November 2000. MEPRD collaborates with local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions to develop and improve parks, recreational facilities, and trails throughout the two-county area. Additionally, MEPRD works to increase awareness and utilization of these amenities by providing related maps, data, statistics, and marketing materials.

For more information, visit www.meprd.org.