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## Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 12, 2023

### **METRO EAST PARK AND RECREATION DISTRICT ANNOUNCES \$3.4 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDING FOR LOCAL PARKS, TRAILS**

MADISON AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES, IL – The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) today announced a new grant cycle of \$3.4 million to support local parks and trails in Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois. Available grant programs include the Park and Trail Grant Program (\$3M), the Community Planning Grant (\$400K) and the Event Sponsorship Grant Program (\$20K).

“We are excited to announce this new round of grant funding,” said Cole Preston, MEPRD Grant Coordinator. “These grants will help to further catalyze the planning and development of new parks, trails, and amenities, improve existing facilities, and promote outdoor recreation in our region.”

MEPRD was formed in November 2000 by the voters of Madison and St. Clair Counties to develop and maintain a public system of interconnecting parks and trails throughout the district. In pursuit of this mission, MEPRD partners and collaborates with other local governments, special districts, and others by supporting projects that align with the district’s mission and objectives.

Over the years, MEPRD has supported a total of 247 projects from 67 unique project partners, infusing nearly \$38 million into the region’s parks and trails. “The continued success of these programs is a testament to the collaborative spirit and relentless dedication by our local partners, demonstrating that the collective vision of two counties can shape the destiny of an entire region,” noted Preston.

MEPRD is currently accepting applications for all three grant programs based on the criteria specified within each of the applications. Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact MEPRD staff with any questions or for help. All programs operate on a first-come, first-served basis.

See below for a summary of each of the MEPRD FY24 Grant Programs. For additional information on any of these programs or to download the application, go to [www.meprd.org/funding](http://www.meprd.org/funding).

#### **MEPRD FY 2024 Park and Trail Grant**

The Park and Trail Grant is a reimbursement grant available to municipalities, townships, counties, park districts, transit districts, universities, and 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations for the acquisition, improvement, and/or development of public parks, trails, and recreation facilities in Madison and St. Clair Counties, Illinois.

- *Total Program Budget: \$3,000,000.*

- *Awards:* Up to \$100,000 for park projects and other non-trail projects; or up to \$300,000 for regional trail projects (not to exceed 40% of eligible project costs).
- *Application Process:* Applications are accepted, reviewed, and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. 100% of program funds will be initially restricted to applicants and projects that meet the criteria for Grant Round #1. If any funding remains unpledged at the close of round #1, the remaining program funds will be made unrestricted and can be applied for by an eligible applicant/project type under Grant Round #2.

Grant Round #1: 7/12/2023, at 9:00 a.m. — 8/31/2023, at 3:00 p.m.

Grant Round #2: 9/1/2023, at 7:30 a.m. — 5/31/2024, at 3:00 p.m.

- For more information about the program and to learn more about grant round eligibility requirements, go to <http://www.meprd.org/park-trail-grant>.

### **MEPRD FY 2024 Community Planning Grant**

The MEPRD Community Planning Grant is a reimbursement grant available to units of local government, counties, park districts, and transit districts in Madison and St. Clair Counties, Ill. for the development of a community-wide Parks Master Plan *and/or* a community-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

- *Total Program Budget:* \$400,000
- *Awards:* Up to \$40,000 or 40% of eligible project costs, whichever is less.
- *Application Process:* Applications are accepted, reviewed, and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. MEPRD will begin accepting applications on July 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. through May 31, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.; or until 100% of program funds are depleted, whichever comes first.
- For more information about the program, go to <http://www.meprd.org/planning-grant>.

### **MEPRD FY 2024 Event Sponsorship Grant Program**

The MEPRD Event Sponsorship Grant supports walking, running, biking, and cycling events (to include biathlons and triathlons) that take place in, or promote the use of, public parks and trails in Madison and St. Clair Counties, Ill. The program is available to public organizations and 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations headquartered within 15 miles of MEPRD's jurisdiction.

- *Total Program Budget:* \$20,000
- *Awards:* Up to \$1,000 for 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations; up to \$2,500 for public organizations (not to exceed 25% of event costs).
- *Application Process:* Applications are accepted, reviewed, and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. MEPRD will begin accepting applications on July 12, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. through May 31, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.; or until 100% of program funds are depleted, whichever comes first.
- For more information, go to <http://www.meprd.org/event-sponsorship>.

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*The Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) was formed by voters of Madison and St. Clair Counties, Illinois in November 2000. MEPRD partners with local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions for the purposes of developing and improving parks, recreational facilities, and trails throughout the two-county area. MEPRD also increases awareness and use of these amenities by providing related maps, data, statistics, and marketing materials. For more information, visit [www.meprd.org](http://www.meprd.org)*