



## Metro East Park and Recreation District

Proudly Serving Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois

### FY 2026 Priority Paths Grant Program

— Information and Application —

Project Sponsor Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(List only one entity)*

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis between July 9, 2025, and May 29, 2026, or until 100% of the FY26 Grant Program funds are pledged, whichever date is sooner.

**Submit two (2) originals and one (1) electronic copy of this application to:**

Metro East Park and Recreation District  
Attention: Grant Coordinator  
104 United Drive  
Collinsville, IL 62234

#### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date and Time Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Submittal includes 2 Originals and 1 High-Resolution Electronic Copy:  Yes  No

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## SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION TO MEPRD AND THE GRANT PROGRAM

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### 1.1. About Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD)

- **Organizational Information:** Metro East Park and Recreation District (MEPRD) was formed by voters in November 2000 and is responsible for the development of parks, trails, and recreational facilities in Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois. The District often supplements the efforts of local governments, special districts, and other jurisdictions already engaged in these efforts.
- **MEPRD Mission Statement:** MEPRD shall have as its primary duty the development of a public system of parks and interconnecting trails throughout Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois.

### 1.2. Grant Program Overview

- **Program Name:** MEPRD FY 2026 Priority Paths Grant Program
- **Program Intent and Objectives:** The primary objective of this program is to fund the development of AASHTO-compliant Class I Bikeways (minimum 10' wide, striped Shared-Use Path) that bridge critical gaps between Madison County and St. Clair County trail systems as identified by MEPRD. MEPRD recognizes that the exact alignment of these Priority Paths may not be determined at the time of application due to property acquisition and detailed study requirements. Therefore, applicants should identify their preferred alignment or corridor. The primary focus will be on the project's ability to fulfill the specified 'Priority Path Zone' objective, with the understanding that the precise route may evolve, but shall not deviate from the primary objective. Applicants will be expected to keep MEPRD informed of alignment progress and any significant changes through regular status reports.

MEPRD understands these complex projects may require many years to complete. So long as a Project Sponsor begins making demonstrable progress towards defined milestones within two (2) years of the grant award (see Section 6.4), there is no maximum time limit for overall project completion, provided continuous progress is maintained and reported. The paramount goal of this program is the successful fulfillment of one of the specified 'Priority Path Zone' objectives, ensuring a functional connection is made, even if the exact path alignment requires adjustment during project development.

- **MEPRD Total Program Funding:** MEPRD has committed \$3,000,000 for the FY 2026 Priority Paths Grant Program.

## SECTION 2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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### 2.1. Eligible Applicants

*Eligible Applicants are as follows:*

- Madison County Transit (MCT) – for the Red Zone Priority Path
- St. Clair County Transit (SCCTD) – for the Green Zone Priority Path

Alternative Applicant for Projects: If a transit district formally declines to apply or fails to apply by May 1, 2026, MEPRD will allow another public agency to apply for the grant. To be eligible, the alternative applicant must have jurisdiction over the entire trail corridor and agree to assume all responsibilities of the primary Project Sponsor as defined in this program, including all requirements for ownership, operation, and maintenance.

### 2.2. General Project Eligibility

- To qualify as an eligible project, the primary scope of work must be for the development of a complete and contiguous non-motorized and fully separated Class I Bikeway, also known as a shared-use path.

- Additionally, all projects must:
  - Identify a preferred alignment or corridor that meets the specific 'Priority Path Zone' objectives, even if the final route is subject to further study and acquisition.
  - Be AASHTO-compliant (minimum 10' wide, hard-surfaced shared use path).
  - Be a fully separated Class I Bikeway.
  - Be striped.
  - Provide a direct and logical connection between the existing regional trail segments.
  - Adhere to ADA requirements.

### 2.3. Specific "Priority Path Zone" Objectives

While flexibility in specific alignment is understood (see Section 1.2), the project's core requirement is to successfully and fully achieve one of the 'Priority Path Zone' objectives outlined below. The chosen corridor and eventual alignment must demonstrably lead to the completion of this objective. Projects must fully complete one of the following "Priority Path Zone" objectives:

- **Red Zone:** Create a direct connection from the interconnected regional trail network found within Madison County, IL to the MCT Confluence Trail. This new segment will also provide connectivity to the McKinley Bridge Bikeway (existing) and the Metro East Riverfront Trail (in-progress).

*Eligible Trail Corridors that fulfill this objective are as follows:*

- MCT Goshen Trail to the MCT Confluence Trail
- MCT Bluff Trail to the MCT Confluence Trail
- MCT Nature Trail to the MCT Confluence Trail
- MCT Schoolhouse Trail to the MCT Confluence Trail
- Alternative direct corridors that fulfil the objective as determined by MEPRD

- **Green Zone:** Create a direct connection from the interconnected regional trail network found within St. Clair County, IL to the southern terminus of the MCT Goshen Trail at Kyle Road in O'Fallon, IL.

*Eligible Trail Corridors that fulfil this objective are as follows:*

- SCCTD MetroBikeLink Trail to the MCT Goshen Trail via the Old Collinsville Road Trail
- SCCTD MetroBikeLink Trail to the MCT Goshen Trail via the St. Ellen Mine Park Trail
- SCCTD MetroBikeLink Trail to the MCT Goshen Trail via the Shiloh Trail
- SCCTD MetroBikeLink Trail to the MCT Goshen Trail via Rieder Road
- Alternative direct corridors that fulfil the objective as determined by MEPRD

\* Refer to the map on page 12 for an illustration of the red and green priority path zones referenced above.

### 2.4. Site Location and Control

- Eligible development projects must be located on property that is either owned by the Project Sponsor or leased/controlled by the Project Sponsor.
- Property leased or controlled by the Project Sponsor may be publicly or privately owned, as long as the terms of such lease or control are irrevocable and meet the minimum timeline requirements specified in Section 6.6 "Public Access."

### 2.5. Award Limitations

- **Limit per Project Sponsor:** Project Sponsors are limited to one (1) FY 2026 Priority Paths Grant award.
- **County Distribution:** During the FY26 funding cycle, no more than one (1) MEPRD Priority Paths Grant will be awarded within each county—i.e., one maximum for Madison County and one maximum for St. Clair County.

- **Coordination with Park and Trail Grant Projects:** To protect the integrity of the Priority Path corridor, MEPRD will coordinate with the Priority Path grant recipient if a Park and Trail Grant application is submitted by others seeking to construct trail segments within the Priority Path grant recipient's preferred Priority Path corridor. MEPRD will reserve the right to deny any such application based on any such coordination with the Priority Path grant recipient.
- **Multi-Agency Collaboration:** MEPRD's Park and Trail Grant Program may be utilized by other public agencies to fund segments of an approved Priority Path, in partnership with the Priority Path Grant recipient. To qualify, the applying agency must meet the definition of a "Bona Fide Applicant" as defined below. Grant funds awarded to a Bona Fide Applicant for a Priority Path segment through the Park and Trail Grant Program will not be deducted from the main Priority Path grant recipient's award.

"Bona Fide Applicant" Requirement: A "Bona Fide Applicant" is a public agency that certifies it is the true project sponsor for the trail segment and agrees to: (a) build, own, operate, insure, and maintain the segment; and (b) not transfer ownership or maintenance duties to the main Priority Path grant recipient for a minimum of twenty (20) years, as specified in Section 6.6.

Coordination Requirement: Any public agency applying for funds as a partner must get a "Letter of Technical Coordination" from the main Priority Path grant recipient. The letter shall confirm the new segment's design and location are in conformity with the Priority Path's overall design. This letter is only needed after the main recipient has submitted its own Priority Path Grant application.

## SECTION 3. FUNDING DETAIL

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### 3.1. Grant Award Amounts

- There is no minimum grant request or award.
- MEPRD FY26 Priority Paths Grant awards shall not exceed 40% of the total project cost, up to a maximum award of \$1,500,000 for a qualifying Priority Path project, plus any supplemental funding detailed below.
- **Supplemental Funding for Priority Path Projects:** A recipient of a FY26 Priority Paths Grant may, in any subsequent fiscal year, elect to forgo its eligibility to apply for a new Park and Trail Grant. In lieu of such application, the recipient may formally request a supplemental increase to its original Priority Path Grant award. This option may be exercised in multiple years. The value of each supplemental increase shall not exceed the maximum eligible award for a trail project as defined in that fiscal year's Park and Trail Grant Program guidelines. All supplemental funding will be absorbed into the original Priority Path grant award and will be governed by all terms of the FY26 Priority Paths Grant Program.

### 3.2. Design/Engineering Fee Cap

- MEPRD's reimbursement for all eligible engineering fees – including design, preliminary engineering, and construction engineering – shall be capped at forty percent (40%) of the total MEPRD Priority Path Grant award (including any supplemental funding). Ongoing reimbursement of eligible engineering expenses will be at a rate of 40% of the documented design/engineering expense, up to the 40% total cap.

### 3.3. Reimbursement Basis

- MEPRD grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis, covering up to forty percent (40%) of eligible, documented costs, not to exceed any caps or percentages specified herein. *(see Section 6.5)*

### 3.4. Project Revenue Breakdown (Match Requirements)

- **MEPRD Share:** No More Than 40% of the total project cost should be made up of the requested MEPRD FY26 Priority Paths Grant award (\$1,500,000 maximum, plus any supplemental funding). *(see Section 3.1)*

- **Sponsor Share (Match):** No Less Than 60% of the total project cost should be made up of any combination of the following project revenues:
  - Monetary Contribution from Project Sponsor
  - Federal, State, County, or other Public Grants/Funds/Appropriations
  - Non-Public or 501(c)3 Grants/Funds/Donations
  - Madison County PEP Funds / St. Clair County Park Grants
- **Ineligible for Calculating Project Costs (Match):**
  - The value of the Applicant’s Force Account Labor
  - The value of donated or owned land
  - The value of donated labor
  - The value of donated services, equipment, and goods

**3.5. Excess Project Revenues and Award Adjustments**

- MEPRD grant funds cannot be used to cover any portion of a project already fully funded by other public or non-public grants, funds, donations, or appropriations; nor can the value of the fully funded project be incorporated into the project value specified within the MEPRD grant application.
- Combined funding from all funding sources, regardless of source, shall not exceed 100% of the total eligible project cost. In the event that project funding covers the full project cost or a percentage greater than specified in the application approved by MEPRD, the MEPRD grant award will be reduced or rescinded to ensure no overpayment occurs.

**SECTION 4. APPLICATION PROCESS**

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**4.1. Submission Window**

- Applications for the MEPRD FY 2026 Priority Paths Grant Program will be accepted on an ongoing basis between **7:30 a.m. on July 9, 2025, and 3:00 p.m. on May 29, 2026.**

**4.2. Submission Deadline and Late Applications**

- Applications received after 3:00 p.m. on May 29, 2026, will not be considered for FY26 funding and will not be retained for the following fiscal year.

**4.3. Application Submission Requirements**

*Grant Applicants must submit:*

- Two (2) original signed applications (use binder clips, not binding or staples).
- One (1) electronic copy. The electronic copy should be HIGH-RESOLUTION and in PDF format, submitted via email, CD, or flash drive. Any attachments should also be high-resolution. CDs and flash drives will not be returned to applicants.

**4.4. Delivery and Review Process**

- Complete applications, as determined by MEPRD, must be received at least two weeks prior to the desired MEPRD board meeting for presentation.
- Deliver to MEPRD by UPS, USPS, FedEx, or hand delivery; faxed copies will not be accepted.
- MEPRD will review each application and provide notification within 45 days of board meeting via USPS of MEPRD’s decision to approve or deny requested funding.

## SECTION 5. ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE PROJECT COMPONENTS

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### 5.1. Eligible Project Components

The following components are only eligible if they are directly related to and are completed in conjunction with a complete and contiguous Priority Path identified in this Application.

Eligible components within an eligible project include, but are not limited to:

- ADA Improvements for publicly accessible trail facilities
- Amenities for trailheads (excluding those in the ineligible section below)
- Bike Racks, Bike Lockers, and Fix/Tune Stations for trailheads, trails, and public facilities
- Bridges, Box Culverts, and Bike/Ped Intersection Improvements related to trails
- Demolition, Erosion Control, and related expenses
- Drinking Fountains (along a trail or trailhead)
- Alignment Studies/Engineering/Architectural/Design Fees
- Fencing (along a trail or trailhead)
- Improvements (to an existing trail or trailhead facility tied to an eligible trail development project)
- Landscaping / Site Beautification (non-native and invasive plants/trees are ineligible)
- Lighting for trails and trailheads
- Pavilions, Gazebos, and Open-air Shelters (along a trail or trailhead)
- Parking Lots (for trailheads only)
- Restrooms for trails and trailheads (excluding those in the ineligible section below)
- Roadways within a trailhead
- Safety Amenities (includes surveillance systems and emergency call stations)
- Sidewalks or Pedestrian Accommodations within a trailhead
- Signage and Kiosks for Wayfinding/Directional/Distance (including MEPRD Acknowledgement Sign)
- Striping, Markings, and Signage for bicycle trails (for new applications only)
- Utility/Sanitation Systems (installation of water, sewer, gas, and/or electric for eligible projects)
- Water Quality Improvement related to an eligible project (e.g., detention ponds, grass swales)

### 5.2. Ineligible Projects

- Projects located outside of Madison and/or St. Clair Counties in Illinois.
- Sidewalks and paths under 10' in width.
- Trails that are not AASHTO compliant and/or not striped and/or not fully separated.
- Trails not identified within the FY26 Priority Paths Program.
- Maintenance or repair of existing trails.

### 5.3. Ineligible Project Components

Ineligible components within a project include, but are not limited to:

- Any component not directly related to the public's enjoyment and use of the approved Priority Path
- Acquisition of Land from another public agency
- Administrative Facilities/Buildings/Offices
- Archaeological and Environmental Surveys/Testing/Excavations
- Community Centers/Facilities
- Concession Equipment, Supplies, and Inventory
- Decorative Water Features/Fountains
- Environmental Mitigation
- Gardens
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Grant Application, Report, or Form Preparation and related work

- Historic Sites/Structures and Preservation
- Irrigation Systems
- Maintenance/Repair/Upkeep projects
- Maintenance and Storage Buildings
- Marketing Materials, Maps/Brochures, Temporary Signs/Banners
- Monuments, Murals, Plaques, Public Art, Sculptures, and Statues
- Mowing and Groundkeeper-related Equipment
- Parking Lots (not within a trailhead)
- Sidewalks or Pedestrian Accommodations (not within a park or trailhead)
- Streetscape Projects
- Striping and Markings for Bicycle Trails and Lanes (for repeat applications)
- Traffic Counts/Studies and Counting Devices
- Trails for All-Terrain Vehicles, Off-Highway Vehicles, and Snowmobiles
- Vehicles of any kind (e.g., mowers, service vehicles, golf carts)
- Welcome/Visitor Centers

## SECTION 6. POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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### 6.1. Project Agreement

- Priority Paths Grant recipients must sign a Project Agreement with MEPRD upon notice of grant award.
- It is the recipient's responsibility to complete and submit all required documents pertaining to the Project Agreement. Missing or incomplete documents required in the Project Agreement will delay written notice to proceed from MEPRD.

### 6.2. Notice to Proceed and Cost Eligibility

- MEPRD will send a written notice to proceed along with the fully executed Project Agreement.
- Costs incurred by grantees prior to the receipt of a fully executed Project Agreement AND notice to proceed are ineligible for reimbursement by MEPRD.

### 6.3. Project Period

- The project period is defined as the date of notice to proceed to project closeout.

### 6.4. Commencement of Work, Milestones, Scope, and Budget

- **Commencement of Work:** Projects are required to get underway and begin making progress within two (2) years, based on the milestones outlined in the approved Project Schedule submitted with the application. MEPRD acknowledges that the full completion of a Priority Path may extend over many years. Provided this initial two-year progress requirement is met and the Project Sponsor continues to actively work on the project and submit regular progress reports, MEPRD supports an extended project timeline as necessary to achieve the Priority Path objective. The Project Schedule (Attachment D) should reflect this understanding and be updated as needed.
- **Milestones & Progress:** Project Sponsors must identify and define project milestones and an anticipated project completion/closeout date in Attachment D. Milestone schedules may be adjusted if project conditions change. Sponsors shall notify MEPRD in writing of any significant changes to the project schedule, to include any adjustments to the project's anticipated completion/closeout date. Progress will be monitored through quarterly project status reports. These status reports must include, among other required information, an update on the status of any previously reported anticipated grants,

appropriations, or donations, and details and documentation for any newly secured grants, appropriations, or donations received for the project since the last report.

- **Project Scope and Budget:** The 'Priority Path Zone' objective of the project, as approved by MEPRD, must remain unchanged throughout the project period. However, MEPRD understands that other elements of the project scope, specific alignment, and budget may require refinement as the project progresses through design, study, and acquisition. Applicants should define their initial scope, alignment concept, and budget to the best of their current ability. Substantive changes to the project scope, alignment, or budget must be discussed with and receive written approval from MEPRD before implementation to ensure continued adherence to the primary objective and program guidelines. Unauthorized scope changes, or those lacking such prior MEPRD approval, shall be ineligible for reimbursement.

#### 6.5. Reimbursement Process and Financial Records

- **General Reimbursement:** The MEPRD FY26 Priority Paths Grant Program operates on a reimbursement basis. MEPRD will issue partial grant payments to the Project Sponsor for eligible, documented costs incurred for work completed in accordance with the approved project scope and grant agreement. Actual payout on each request is contingent upon review of eligible items and may be adjusted if expenses fall outside of the project scope. Only eligible items within the approved application will be reimbursed; changes to the project scope to “spend” the grant award in its entirety are prohibited.
- **Ongoing Reimbursement Requests (Partial Payments):** The Project Sponsor may submit requests for reimbursement of documented, eligible expenses. While the project is ongoing, requests may be submitted on a quarterly basis. Each reimbursement request must include the following:
  - A completed and signed MEPRD Priority Paths Grant Reimbursement Form.
  - Copies of paid invoices and proof of payment to verify costs.
  - A progress report, signed by the Project Sponsor, indicating the work completed, along with a summary of overall project progress to date, referencing the approved project milestones.
- **Project Closeout and Final Payment:** Upon completion of all project activities, a final inspection and acceptance by an MEPRD representative is required before the release of the final grant payment. Additionally, the Project Sponsor must submit a final grant reimbursement request to MEPRD within ninety (90) days of project completion unless extenuating circumstances (e.g., coordination with other funding agencies) prevent it and are discussed with and approved by MEPRD. Failure to do so will result in Project Sponsor forfeiting all project reimbursements and relieving MEPRD from further payment obligations on the grant. The final reimbursement request must be accompanied by a comprehensive financial summary detailing all project revenues received from all sources (including all MEPRD grant payments, Project Sponsor contributions, and all other grants, appropriations, and donations secured throughout the project's duration) and all eligible project expenditures. This is to ensure final compliance with match requirements and funding limitations outlined in Section 3.4 and Section 3.5.
- **Financial Records:** All funds expended by the Project Sponsor in conjunction with the project must comply with Local, State, and Federal laws pertaining to the expenditure of public funds. Documentation in the form of cancelled checks, properly executed records, contracts, vouchers, orders, invoices, pay requests, timesheets, and any other accounting documents regarding the Project Sponsor’s cost-share requirement and all project costs will be required for reimbursement. Records must be sufficiently detailed to support a third-party audit. All project records must be maintained for a period of no less than five (5) years, or longer if required by law.

#### 6.6. Public Access

- Property acquired or developed with MEPRD grant assistance shall not be utilized or developed for any use other than public recreation use per the terms specified herein. Acquired/developed land shall be operated and maintained for a minimum of twenty (20) years for public recreation use.
- Conversion of a project receiving MEPRD grant assistance shall result in the Project Sponsor being held liable for replacing the converted development with new development deemed comparable by MEPRD in terms of current fair market value, recreation value, usefulness, and location.
- Property acquired or developed with MEPRD assistance from this program must be open to the general public, to include at minimum any and all residents within MEPRD's jurisdiction, for the approved use specified herein and in the MEPRD Project Agreement without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or residence during the time period specified.

#### 6.7. Compliance Requirements

- **American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and AASHTO Compliance:** Project Sponsor acknowledges that it has performed due diligence to assure its project complies with the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and, if applicable, the guidelines of AASHTO.
- **Permits:** The Project Sponsor is responsible for obtaining any and all necessary permits, licenses, and forms of consent regarding projects approved for MEPRD funding in this program prior to the construction, and thereafter subsequent operation and maintenance of the project.

#### 6.8. Reports and Inspections

- Quarterly Project Status Report forms shall be completed and submitted in a timely manner as requested by MEPRD. Failure to submit progress reports could jeopardize your MEPRD grant award.
- MEPRD staff shall have full access to grant-assisted facilities and applicable financial records at all times for periodic inspections as construction progresses and throughout the life of the project.
- Final inspection and acceptance of the completed project must be made by an MEPRD representative prior to grant reimbursement.

#### 6.9. Publicity and Signage

- **Publicity:** Acknowledgement to MEPRD should be given at appropriate times before, during, and after construction/acquisition, including, but not limited to, temporary signage displayed during construction/acquisition, permanent signage post-construction/acquisition, news articles, press releases, interviews, project websites, social media pages, ribbon cuttings, dedication ceremonies, etc.
- **Signage:** The Project Sponsor is responsible for designing, purchasing, and installing a permanent grant acknowledgement sign that is visible to intended users of the improvement at the MEPRD-assisted project site for the useful life of the project. The specifications must include MEPRD's logo and Project Name or Project Description, at minimum. Worn or damaged signs must be replaced in a timely manner at Project Sponsor's cost. Outdoor signs must be waterproof and UV-protected. All signage permits are the responsibility of the Project Sponsor.

#### 6.10. Termination of Grant

- **Breach of Agreement:** A grantee will be in breach of the Project Agreement if it fails to complete the project or demonstrates through action or inaction that the project is no longer a priority. Examples of a breach include, but are not limited to: (a) organizational leadership no longer supports the project; (b) other trail projects are repeatedly prioritized over the Priority Path; or (c) failure to complete key project milestones in a timely manner.

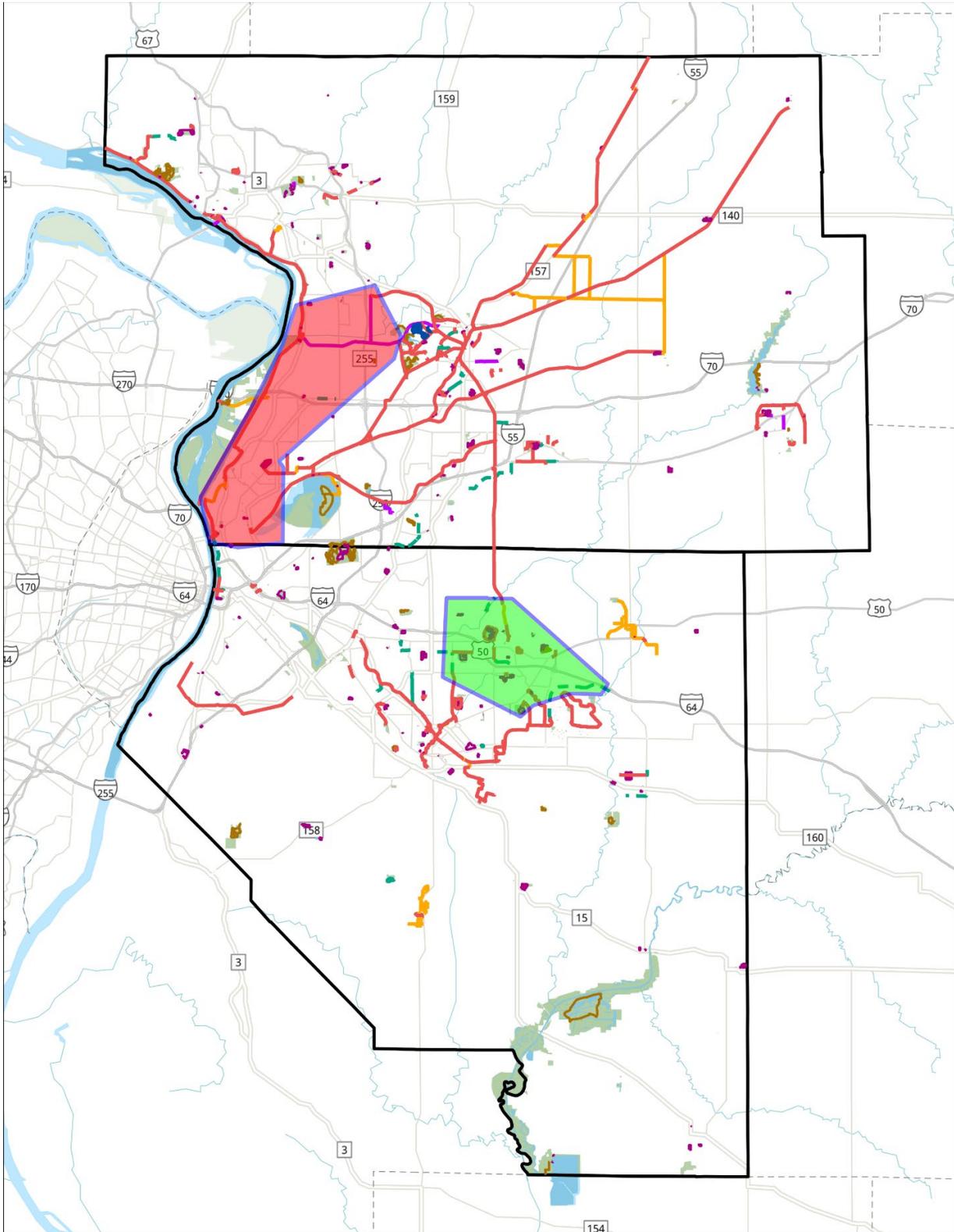
- **Cure Period:** In the event of a breach, MEPRD will issue a formal written notice. The grantee shall have sixty (60) days from the date of the notice to cure the breach. The grantee is responsible for providing documentation to MEPRD's satisfaction that the breach has been rectified.
- **Penalties for Termination:** If the Project Agreement is terminated due to an uncured breach, the grantee must repay all grant funds previously disbursed by MEPRD for the project. The grantee shall also be ineligible for any MEPRD grant assistance for two (2) consecutive years. MEPRD reserves the right to pursue any other available legal action to recover its funds.

## SECTION 7. DEFINITIONS

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- **Force Account Labor:** Labor provided by the Project Sponsor's own staff. Costs associated with force account labor, including but not limited to wages, salaries, and benefits, are not eligible for reimbursement from MEPRD grant funds and shall not be included as a project cost or as part of the Project Sponsor's matching share in the project budget submitted to MEPRD for this grant program. Any project tasks undertaken by the Project Sponsor using their own staff (force account labor) must be funded separately by the Project Sponsor and are outside the scope of the Total Project Cost calculation for MEPRD grant purposes.
- **Force Account Equipment Rates:** Equipment owned or rented by the Project Sponsor that is utilized by their own staff (Force Account Labor) for project-related activities. Costs associated with the use of sponsor-owned equipment (e.g., usage rates, depreciation) or the costs of renting equipment for force account activities are not eligible for reimbursement from MEPRD grant funds and shall not be included as a project cost or as part of the Project Sponsor's matching share in the project budget submitted to MEPRD for this grant program. Any use of equipment for force account activities must be funded separately by the Project Sponsor and is outside the scope of the Total Project Cost calculation for MEPRD grant purposes.
- **Project Sponsor:** Applicant applying for MEPRD funding. The Project Sponsor must own and be responsible for maintaining the project (i.e., responsible for financial support, project management, maintenance, etc.) per the duration specified within the public access section of this application. If not the landowner, Project Sponsor must have site control via irrevocable lease, agreement, or other formal documentation. Maintenance obligations specified in this paragraph may be satisfied utilizing paid contracted services, but the ownership and control obligations specified in this paragraph may not be transferred or assigned to others. If transferred or assigned to others, see the conversion details contained within Section 6.6 "Public Access." Additionally, the Project Sponsor must be clearly advertised as the owner of the trail.
- **Trail Project:** Development of a non-motorized full separated Class I Bikeway (also known as a Shared-Use Path) that is hard-surfaced, striped, no less than 10' in width, and compliant with AASHTO standards.

SECTION 8. MAP OF PRIORITY PATH ZONES



**SECTION 9. APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

A complete application should contain all the following required components, in this order:

FY 2026 Priority Paths Grant Application Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Two (2) signed, original hardcopies required.</li> <li>* One (1) electronic copy required.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment A — Detailed Written Project Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Please refer to the “Supporting Documents/Attachments” section on page 19 for a detailed description of each required Attachment.</li> <li>* All required components/attachments must be included in each copy of the application.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment B — Estimated Cost	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment C — Site Development Plan	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment D — Project Schedule	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment E — General Maintenance Plan	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment F — Resolution / Letter	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment G — Other Grants/Donations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Certification Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* An original, signed copy must be included in both hardcopy applications.</li> </ul>

**Grant Application Submittal Instructions**

**Submit two (2) original hard copies** of the completed FY 2026 Priority Paths Grant Application and all attachments to MEPRD by mailing or dropping off to the following address:

Metro East Park and Recreation District  
 Attn: Grant Coordinator  
 104 United Drive  
 Collinsville, Illinois 62234

**Submit one (1) electronic copy** of the completed application (and all required attachments) to MEPRD. Applicants are welcome to submit a flash drive or CD alongside the hardcopy application or may submit the electronic copy via email to [info@meprd.org](mailto:info@meprd.org).

**As a reminder, no applications will be accepted before 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**

For grant support/questions, contact MEPRD Grant Coordinator Cole Preston at (618) 346-4905 or at [cpreston@meprd.org](mailto:cpreston@meprd.org).

\*\* Continue to Application Form on Next Page \*\*

**SECTION 10. APPLICATION FORM**

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Please fill out this form in its entirety. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. Applications must be typed.

**Project Sponsor Information**

1. Project Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(list only one entity)*
  
2. Project Sponsor Address:  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Project Sponsor FEIN: \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Contact Information**

Tell us about the Project Contact (P.C.), or project manager, assigned to the project. This person will be required to complete status reports on a quarterly basis and will need to know detailed information about the project.

4. P.C. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. P.C. Title: \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. P.C. Mailing Address:  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. P.C. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ P.C. Cell: \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. P.C. Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Continue to Next Section/Page \*\*

## Project Details and Related Information

9. Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Preferred Project Corridor/General Location:  
Describe the general corridor for the proposed path.  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Is the proposed project identified in a municipal, county, regional, state trail, or recreation plan or MEPRD's Long Range Development Plan?  
 Yes | Which Plan? \_\_\_\_\_  
 No
12. Will the Project Sponsor own/control and maintain the completed project?  
 Yes (Required)  
 No
13. Will the project site be protected in perpetuity for public recreation?  
 Yes  
 No | How many years is the site protected? (*must be ≥ 20 years*) \_\_\_\_\_ years
14. Project Type: Select the project type(s) that best depicts the primary scope of your project.  
(*Check all that apply*)  
 Acquisition  
 Development (*required*)
15. Project Site/Location: Select the *Priority Path Zone* that your project falls within:  
 Red Zone – Madison County Transit  
 Green Zone – St. Clair County Transit District
16. Trail Specifications:  
What Trail Surface Material will be used: \_\_\_\_\_  
Width of Trail (≥10' required): \_\_\_\_\_ feet    Approx. Length of Trail: \_\_\_\_\_ miles  
*\*Lesser widths are ineligible*
17. Estimated Project Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Estimated Month and Year required*)

**Project Budget and Breakdown of Eligible Costs**

MEPRD understands that for Priority Path projects, cost estimates at the application stage may be preliminary, especially if the precise alignment is yet to be determined. Provide the best available estimates.

18. Total Estimated Project Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
19. Requested MEPRD Grant: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ which is \_\_\_\_\_ % of line 18.  
*(must be less than or equal to 40% of the total project cost listed on line 18)*
20. Combined Total of Estimated Cost Sharing and Other Grants:  
*(must be greater than or equal to 60% of the total project cost listed on line 18)*
- A. Monetary Contribution by Project Sponsor *(excluding funding by others)* \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Non-Public Grant(s), Funds, and/or Monetary Donation(s) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Local Public Grant *(Madison County PEP or St. Clair County Parks Grant)* \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Federal, State, or Other Public Grants or Appropriations *(excluding MEPRD)* \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- E. **Cost Share Subtotal** (A + B + C + D) which is \_\_\_\_\_ % of Line 18. \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*\* Line 19 + Line 20(E) should equal Line 18 if filled out correctly.*

21. General Expense Categories:

<u>Category</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Estimated Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Acquisition Costs:	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	_____ %
A/E Fees:	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	_____ %
• Preliminary Engineering:		\$.....	
• Construction Engineering:		\$.....	
Development Costs:	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	_____ %
Contingency:	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	_____ %
Total Estimated Project Cost <i>(should equal line 18):</i>		\$ _____	100 %

\*\* Continue to Next Section/Page \*\*



**Discussion**

23. Describe the importance of this project to your organization:

24. Describe the process by which you will make the Priority Path trail segment a priority, both from an organizational and budgeting perspective and in relation to other prioritized projects:

## Supporting Documents/Attachments

Attach the following supporting documents to your application in the order specified below.

**Attachment A Detailed Written Project Scope.** This should be a written narrative describing the project, including details to answer 'what', 'where', etc. (e.g., the preferred corridor, general route, trailhead locations, etc.). The detail and components listed/described in this section should coincide with what is illustrated in Attachment C and reflect the project's current stage of planning, acknowledging that specific alignments may be refined over time.

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**Attachment B Conceptual or Engineer Estimates** or other documentation to support the preliminary estimated project costs identified in the application. Note that the attachment(s) must be as detailed as currently feasible (i.e., itemized if possible). If formal estimates are not yet available due to the project's early stage, provide the basis for the costs presented (e.g., comparable project data, preliminary planner-level estimates).

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**Attachment C Detailed Site Development Plan.** This should be a visual of the project identifying the proposed corridor and the general location of any currently anticipated major project components. Precise engineering or construction drawings are not required if the project is in early planning stages; a clear representation of the intended corridor is sufficient.

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**Attachment D Project Schedule.** Provide a copy of the project's current engineering, construction, and acquisition schedule, to include projected milestones for each phase, if applicable, and an estimated completion date for the overall project. This schedule should be realistic regarding the project's complexity and potential long-term nature, and can be updated in consultation with MEPRD as the project progresses.

*\* Estimated completion date should match the date shown on Line #17*

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**Attachment E General Operation Plan.** Describe the plan for maintenance\* and operation of the project, including general schedule, funding sources, and other relevant details.

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**Attachment F Authorization Letter\* from the Project Sponsor** indicating support for the project and corresponding application to MEPRD, dated no more than six (6) months prior to the submittal of this application.

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**Attachment G Documentation of Other Grants, Appropriations, Donations.** Provide a description and documentation for currently secured grants, appropriations, and cash donations from sources other than MEPRD that are identified in Question 20 (Lines C, D, and E) of the Application Form. Project Sponsors will be required to update MEPRD on any newly secured grants, appropriations, or donations through their quarterly status reports (see Section 6.4) and provide comprehensive documentation of all project revenue with the final reimbursement request (see Section 6.5).

## Certification Statement

In WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned parties have caused this grant application to be executed by their duly designated and authorized representatives.

I do hereby certify that I have the legal authority to represent the Project Sponsor and submit this grant application on behalf of the Project Sponsor (i.e., "Grantee") and that the information presented in this grant application and the referenced attachments are true and correct. I do further certify that the project, i.e., the Priority Path Objective, will be completed in accordance with the provisions set forth in this grant application and the MEPRD project agreement. It is understood that the project must be completed within the timeframe established in this application and the project agreement, and the final reimbursement request must be submitted within ninety (90) days of project completion, unless extenuating circumstances prevent it and are discussed with and approved by MEPRD. Failure to do so will result in the Project Sponsor forfeiting all project reimbursements and relieving MEPRD from further payment obligations on the grant.

I also certify that only the project scope and components, items, and quantities directly related to it and subsequently approved by MEPRD constitute the eligible project for grant reimbursement. I acknowledge that costs associated with any scope, components, items, or quantities falling outside this MEPRD-approved project are ineligible for reimbursement in accordance with FY26 program guidelines.

*\* Signee must be Mayor, Board President, or Chief Executive of organization or department.*

**Name of Grantee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature and Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(date)*

**Attested by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature and Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(date)*

**Name of Grantor:** Metro East Park and Recreation District \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** Bryan Werner \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Title:** Executive Director \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature and Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(date)*

**Attested by:** Cole Preston, Grant Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature and Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(date)*