



Community Challenge Grant Opportunity

Proposals Accepted: January 22 to March 20, 2024

The Anchorage Park Foundation is seeking grant proposals for community-based projects that help improve Anchorage parks, trails, greenbelts, and recreation centers. The Community Challenge Grant program is offered every two years by the Anchorage Park Foundation with funding from Rasmuson Foundation to support community engagement and stewardship of public spaces. Challenge Grants offer a way to accomplish community-led projects in parks or greenbelts that benefit neighbors and the public but may not be easily completed by the Municipality of Anchorage.

There is \$200,000 available for awards up to \$40,000. Project budgets must show a 1:1 match of requested funds and the source of the match. Match can be any combination of volunteer time, the value of donated materials or services, financial donations, or nonfederal grants that contribute to the project.

Completed grant applications received by March 20, 2024, will be reviewed by a committee in a competitive process based on available funding. The grant review committee will recommend a slate of projects for approval by the Anchorage Park Foundation Board of Directors. Awarded projects will start in May and need to be completed by fall of 2025.

The Anchorage Park Foundation is offering a concurrent [Neighborhood Forest Grant](#) opportunity for projects that restore, reforest, and sustain urban forests on public or private land in qualifying Anchorage neighborhoods. Applicants may submit one project proposal to each of the two open grant opportunities.

Important Dates:

February 29, 2024 @ 5:30 pm – Applicant assistance workshop @ Fairview Recreation Center

March 6, 2024 @ 5:30 pm – Applicant assistance workshop online, email for meeting link

March 20, 2024 @ 5 pm – Application deadline

April 24, 2024 – Awards announced

May 1, 2024 – Project start date

May 17, Noon – Project Kickoff Event at Fairview Lions Park, 1201 E 8th Avenue

October 31, 2025 – Project end date

Funding Available: A total of \$200,000 in funding is available. The maximum grant award is \$40,000. Typical awards range between \$5,000 and \$40,000. 1:1 MATCH IS REQUIRED.

Project Assistance: Two workshops provide assistance to applicants, with park planners from Anchorage Parks and Recreation, landscape architects from the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects and forest health experts from the USDA Forest Service.

1. **Thursday, February 29**, 5:30 pm – in person at Fairview Recreation Center, 1121 E 10th Avenue. Food will be provided.
2. **Wednesday, March 6**, 5:30 pm – online only.

Please RSVP for the workshops. Email Diana@anchorageparkfoundation.org to RSVP for food for in-person and to receive meeting link for online.

Eligible Applicants: community-based organizations, neighbor groups (at least 2 individuals), community councils, schools, PTA's, community focused businesses, recreation groups, nonprofits, or other similar groups.

Eligible Projects: All projects must improve or provide access to Municipality of Anchorage parks, trails, greenbelts, or recreation centers, have a clear public benefit, and demonstrate the ability to raise 1:1 in community match. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Building, restoring and maintaining trails and trail access
- Designing and installing interpretive panels
- Removing invasive mayday/prunus padus/birdcherry trees and planting native plants
- Improving community gardens and food forests
- Designing and installing art, little libraries and other creative placemaking
- Utilizing volunteers or Youth Employment in Parks crews to restore and improve streambanks, trails, etc.
- Painting, repairing, building and installing fences, benches, dog waste stations, exercise equipment and other park furniture
- Creating dual uses of tennis courts and pickleball courts
- Improving neighborhood social trails that connect to parks and trails
- Purchasing and installing timing systems and scoreboards at Anchorage pools
- Purchasing equipment to improve the public experience at sports facilities, including Nordic skiing events, baseball, hockey, disk golf, basketball, cricket, etc.
- Purchasing new equipment for, or improve access to, municipal recreation centers
- Designing and building outdoor learning labs in parks or trails near schools
- Purchasing and installing security features
- Improving landscaping and cultivating and planting trees
- Purchasing snow removal equipment and volunteering to improve access to playgrounds, trails and recreation centers in winter (new this year)
- Organizing events to get new and diverse groups of people outside in the winter for health and wellness (new this year)

Match: Applicants must raise 1:1 in community match. For example, a \$20,000 project could be awarded \$10,000 if applicant's proposal meets guidelines to raise \$10,000 in any combination of match from financial donations, volunteer time, non-federal grants or donated materials or services that contribute to the project. Sources of match must be clearly stated in the project budget and secured by the end of the grant period.

Required Proposal Content:

1. Applicant Information:

- Applicant Name
- Point of Contact, including name, title, email address, phone, and mailing address
- Community-Based Organization Status
 - Individual
 - Nonprofit (attach IRS determination letter)
 - Public School or PTA
 - Tribal Entity
 - Community Council
 - Business
 - Other (describe)

2. Organization Description (or description of neighborhood group)

Provide mission statement, description of services provided, audience and geographic area served, and 1-2 accomplishments. Identify project leaders, their major responsibilities and expertise.

3. Size of Organization Budget (if applicable)

4. Project Title

5. Amount of Funding Request

6. Project Overview

In a few sentences, describe the project goal(s) and scope of work to address the concern.

7. Project Details and Activities: Information should include:

- Detailed project activities/scope of work
- Location of project – name of park, trail or recreation center
- Photos or maps of area
- Letter of support from landowner, community council, etc.
- Project partners and roles
- Description of any anticipated permitting, approval, or public involvement process

8. Project Timeline: A timeline of planned activities, deliverables, performance measures, events, etc.

9. Project Budget: Complete the supplied Community Challenge Grant Budget Form. *Note: **Matching dollar for dollar the requested funds is required.** Clearly show source of match. Nonprofit applicants can take 10% indirect.*

[Download Required Project Budget Template](#)

Other Documentation:

- IRS Determination Letter for nonprofits

- Support Letter
- Photo of location
- Additional Project Materials (optional)

Proposal Considerations: Award considerations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Meets an identified public need (master plan, community council, etc.)
- Encourages volunteerism, access and stewardship of public spaces
- Elevates community diversity, accessibility, and inclusivity
- Promotes opportunities for increased individual and community health in winter
- Benefits youth and underserved communities
- Adds value to projects (such as existing or proposed park bond projects)
- Utilizes Youth Employment in Parks work crews
- Gives consideration or understanding to continued maintenance needs

For inspiration, please view past Challenge Grant projects [here](#).

Public Process: In some instances, proposals may require more public involvement and approvals, including but not limited to community council, permitting, Parks and Recreation Commission, Urban Design Commission, and Planning and Zoning Commission. Proposals may be awarded time to complete the public process.

Proposal Submission: All Required proposal content must be submitted via email as a PDF attachment with the subject line Community Challenge Grant Application to: Diana@Anchorageparkfoundation.org AND copy info@Anchorageparkfoundation.org by 5 pm March 20, 2024.

Contact:

Diana Rhoades, Program Director
(907) 249-6652
Diana@Anchorageparkfoundation.org

Thank you to Rasmuson Foundation, the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department, and the Anchorage Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects for partnering with the Anchorage Park Foundation on this grant program.

Anchorage Park Foundation is an equal opportunity provider.