

Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program

Criteria

Part I – Relevance of Proposed Project to Core Program Goals (Merit panel; up to 60 points total)

1) Improving physical and recreational access and addressing recreational deficiencies – 20 points

This criterion will assess the degree to which the proposed project will create or significantly enhance access to close-to-home park and recreation opportunities by expanding the quantity or quality of parks or other outdoor recreation areas.

Priority will be given to projects that (a) propose to create a new park/outdoor recreational area or *significantly* enhance the quality of an existing park/outdoor recreation area by upgrading the infrastructure to be able to provide new high priority recreation services, and (b) are located in densely-settled neighborhoods or communities that lack parks/outdoor recreation areas within a reasonable service area (within .5 miles or a 10-minute walk for a neighborhood park, or within 1 mile for a park serving multiple neighborhoods or a community); or whose existing park/outdoor recreation areas are not of a comparable caliber to park/recreation areas elsewhere in the jurisdiction; and/or whose park/recreation areas are otherwise inadequate to serve community needs.

2) Improving recreation service and economic opportunity for the target population – 15 points

This criterion will assess the degree to which the project will (a) improve outdoor recreational opportunities for low to moderate-income individuals or families for whom serious recreation deficiencies exist, (b) provide short-term and/or permanent employment opportunities, particularly within the same target community, and/or (c) help generate economic benefits for the community outside of the park.

Priority will be given to projects located where they will serve neighborhoods with significant populations of the target group that are lacking in recreation opportunities along with providing employment and economic benefits. Applicant responses are encouraged to include available data/statistics about the local populations to be served by the park/recreation area and be as specific as possible in describing anticipated employment and economic opportunities.

3) Project Engagement and Participation – 15 points

This criterion will assess the level of supportive partnership-building that has occurred the development of the project among the project sponsor, residents of the local community to be served by the park, the private sector, and community and/or conservation organizations.

Priority will be given to projects that can demonstrate that there has been and continues to be a deliberate initiative or effort by the project sponsor and/or its partner(s) to engage residents of the target neighborhood(s) in the project's development. Further, to projects where there is a substantial level of collaboration among the public and private sectors, including multiple levels of government, private/non-profit organizations, and community groups.

4) Innovation and Transformative Attributes – 10 points

This criterion will assess the degree to which the project encompasses or exhibits innovation, especially in ways that can be transformative for the neighborhood(s) and community in terms of revitalization. These qualities could be related to aspects such as: redevelopment of a blighted or distressed property; involvement of new or non-traditional partners; unique features in the project design; employment of novel solutions to challenges addressing the community's recreation needs; the ability to affect or advance other complementary and intrinsic benefits beyond providing new or enhancing park or other outdoor recreation spaces; and other similar characteristics.

This is a somewhat open-ended criterion but is an opportunity for project sponsors to describe and promote features of the project that go above and beyond the recreation services or opportunities the project will provide. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate unique features that make them stand out relative to the other proposals submitted for the competition as well as the "typical" LWCF project.

Part II: Technical Merit and Qualification of Applicants (Technical panel, 15 points total)

5) Project's Alignment with SCORP and other applicable plans – 5 points

This criterion will assess the degree to which the project advances or is otherwise tied to the priority recreation needs and/or goals of the applicable state's SCORP and other relevant park and recreation plans. Projects can also receive credit for aligning with or advancing priorities of other comprehensive or master plans at the city, regional, and/or state level such as community revitalization, economic development, or open space plans.

Priority will be given to projects that meet clearly identified goals and/or needs in the SCORP, particularly any that are specific to urban areas, together with other applicable planning documents at different levels of government and/or private sector initiatives.

6) Project Readiness – 5 points

This criterion will assess the status of the project to evaluate the readiness to be implemented (note the LWCF Manual requires the project break ground within one year of the date of award), the likelihood of successful execution of the project, and the viability of the period of performance for the project's execution.

Priority will be given to projects that are well into the planning stages such that implementation can begin within one year and the project could be opened to the public within 2 to 3 years.

7) Applicant and Partner Capacity – 5 points

This criterion will assess the ability and likelihood of the project sponsor and partner(s) (if applicable) to initiate and successfully complete the project as well as effectively manage and sustain the park or recreation area to ensure long-term viability, particularly in the context of LWCF requirements. Also, assesses the project sponsor's (sub-recipient's) demonstrated capacity for appropriate grant management and successful compliance with grant conditions, particularly with past LWCF and/or other federal grants (if applicable).

Priority will be given to projects where the sponsor and/or partner(s) have experience with federal grants and have successfully completed similar projects with no problems complying with grant regulations or program-specific terms and conditions; and where there appears to be capacity for successful long-term park management and protection. If the sponsor is a past LWCF grant recipient, the sponsor does not have any known outstanding Section 6(f)(3) conversion issues that are not in the process of and on track for successful resolution.

Part III – Financial Support and Leveraging (Technical panel, 25 points total)

8) Viability and reasonableness of the project's budget – 10 points

This criterion will assess the eligibility and reasonableness of the costs included in the project's budget, whether the budget seems realistic for the scope of work, and the availability of or firmness of commitments for the full amount of funds needed to complete the project, including any match commitment(s) that exceed the 1:1 requirement.

Priority will be given to project proposals with clear and detailed budgets that contain all or mostly LWCF-eligible cost items that are reasonable and obviously related to the scope of the work for which the grant funds are specifically being requested. Priority will also be given to projects where funding to cover the entire project budget is mostly in place (excluding the grant amount), particularly any amounts promised as overmatch.

9) Partner Support and Leveraging – 15 points

This criterion will assess the degree to which the project is or will be supported by partnerships with the public, private, and/or non-profit sectors through contributions of money, land, supplies, services, etc., and the extent of financial leveraging of the federal share with non-federal public, private, and/or non-profit resources that allow the project budget to exceed the 1:1 match required by the LWCF Act.

Priority will be given to projects involving multiple and diverse partnerships that have resulted in contributions of financial resources, particularly non-public resources; and that exceed the minimum 1:1 match level primarily with LWCF-eligible costs.