

Solicitation for Grant Applications

Hennepin County Youth Sports Playground Grant

Solicitation due date: **March 17, 2023 at 4 p.m.**

Closing date for all questions: **March 10, 2023 at 4 p.m.**

1 Introduction

1.1 Project overview

The County of Hennepin, State of Minnesota ("County") is soliciting applications for the Youth Sports Playground Grant (the "Grant"). As used herein, the entity/individual responsible for any awarded Grant may be referred to as the "Applicant" and the Applicant's response to this solicitation (the "Solicitation") may be referred to as the "Application".

State legislation authorizing the construction of Target Field allows Hennepin County to use a portion of the 0.15% sales tax surcharge to grant over \$2 million dollars each year to Hennepin County communities to assist with youth activities. A total of \$250,000 annually has been made available for playground grants.

The County contracts with the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission (MASC) as a third-party grant administrator for youth sports grants.

1.2 The Grant

The purpose of the playground grants is to build and improve playground structures throughout Hennepin County. Grant funds may be used for new playground construction, playground renovations or improvements. Grant funds are meant to be the last funds for a project; therefore, funding is not meant to be used for fundraising purposes or as seed money for new projects. The awards are paid as reimbursement to the local government unit after the playground structure has been installed and paperwork showing payment has been submitted. **Grants up to \$50,000 are available.**

To be eligible for the Grant:

- Applicants must be Local Government Units (LGUs). LGUs are defined as governmental entities. For the purposes of this grant, eligible LGUs are municipalities, park districts, public school districts and watershed districts located or operating in Hennepin County. Charter schools and youth sports associations must enlist a local government unit to submit the application.
- LGUs are strongly encouraged to partner with businesses, nonprofits, and other organizations to promote youth activities in their communities. Partnerships between local government units can include playgrounds co-located on school and park facilities or other operating arrangements. Partnerships with non-profit organizations can include matching funds from a source outside the LGU making the request or volunteering hours for community build installations. Athletic Departments, Community Education, and other subsidiaries of school districts are not partners for the purposes of this grant program.
- The playground must be located within Hennepin County

1.3 Grant Application

When submitting an application, Applicants must follow the specific format and content requirements below. Failure to do so will likely prolong the evaluation process and/or may be grounds for rejection of the Application.

Applicant shall describe, in detail, the proposed uses of the Grant funds for the Project. Any other use of Grant funds is strictly prohibited. Applicant shall be solely responsible for securing all additional funds necessary for completion of the Project.

Applicant agrees to only use the Grant funds for the uses indicated above. Use of Grant funds for any other purpose is strictly prohibited. If Applicant uses Grant funds for any other purpose, Applicant shall, upon County's written demand, repay all Grant funds awarded.

2 Evaluation and selection

2.1 Applicant evaluation and recommendation for selection

MASC will consider the Application to determine whether it meets County's requirements and is otherwise eligible for a Grant award. MASC will receive applications, review them for eligibility, and evaluate applications based on the criteria outlined in Section 2.3. Applications will be distributed to a review panel for evaluation. The review panel may consist of trained staff, community volunteers and professionals with a background in sports programming. All materials, including applications and review materials, will be turned over to Hennepin County following the evaluation process. The County will compile recommendations for award for presentation to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. The Hennepin County Board of Commissioners will determine which applicants receive awards.

Submission of an Application shall neither obligate nor entitle an Applicant to enter into a contract with the County or to receive a Grant. This Solicitation does not commit the County to award a contract. Submission of an application shall neither obligate nor entitle an Applicant to enter into a contract with the County. The County reserves the following rights, to be exercised in the County's sole and absolute discretion: 1) to determine whether any aspect of an application satisfactorily meets the criteria established in this Solicitation; 2) to seek clarification or additional information from any Applicant; 3) to negotiate, sequentially or simultaneously, pricing and/or terms with any Applicant; 4) to reject any or all application with or without cause; 5) to waive any irregularities or informalities in an application; 6) to cancel or amend by addenda this Solicitation, in part or entirely; 7) to award multiple contracts to Applicant; and/or 8) award a contract to a grantee that did not submit an application.

2.2 Evaluation of responsiveness

MASC will consider all the material submitted by the Applicant to determine whether the Applicant's offer is in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth in this Solicitation. Applications that do not comply with the provisions in this Solicitation may be considered nonresponsive and may be rejected. Notwithstanding the foregoing, MASC and the County expressly reserve the right to reject any or all Applications with or without cause.

2.3 Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation criteria shall include the following:

- A. Financial need
 - I. Demonstrated provision of programming in financially underserved areas or working with populations who have been financially underserved in Hennepin County
 - II. Lack of funding from internal or external entities available to cover requested costs
 - III. Projects demonstrating financial need will be shown greater preference when evaluated
- B. Number of people served
 - I. Impact on communities that have been underserved
 - II. Impact on populations who have experienced structural and/or institutional inequality
 - III. Number of projected youths who would be able to access the playground
 - IV. Projects demonstrating impact and greatest number of youths served will be shown greater preference when evaluated
- C. Partnerships between local units of government and community or non-profit organizations
 - I. Demonstrated collaboration and/or partnership with a community-based agency or non-profit organization
 - II. Projects with community involvement and partnerships will be shown greater preference when evaluated
- D. Leveraging non-Hennepin County funds and in-kind contributions
 - I. Availability of matching funds
 - II. Ability to leverage non-Hennepin County funds and in-kind contributions
- E. Sustainability
 - I. Capacity to improve playground accessibility and inclusivity
 - II. Community support - Community support can include letters from parent or neighborhood groups, a public process for seeking community input, or other evidence of community engagement with the project.
 - III. Environmental impact of proposed playground construction
 - IV. Projects demonstrating sustainability will be shown greater preference when evaluated
- F. Equitable distribution throughout the County
 - I. To the extent possible, grants will be awarded to a mix of activities and distributed to communities throughout Hennepin County

MASC and the County reserve the right to consider the equitable geographic distribution of the award scheme throughout Hennepin County when presenting recommendations to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners for award determination.

MASC and the County reserve the right to determine whether any aspect of the Application satisfactorily meets the criteria, the right to seek clarification or additional information from any Applicant(s), and the right to waive any irregularities or informalities that MASC and the County deem is in their best interest.

2.4 Execution of Grant agreement

The County may condition the Grant award upon Applicant's execution of a Grant agreement provided by County. As applicable, the Grant agreement shall define the legal relationship between County and Applicant.

The Grant awards are paid as reimbursement to the local government unit after the playground structure has been installed and paperwork showing payment has been submitted.

If you receive a facility and playground award, you must include recognition of the Hennepin County Youth Sports program on your facility signage.

Hennepin County must be notified of grand opening events for facility and playground awards. Hennepin County Communications may attend to take photos and promote the program with portable signage.

When the County Board approves facility grants each year, the County announces all grant winners in a news release.

If an application is selected for a grant award, the Applicant will need to provide a W9 form and will need to supply a Minnesota Tax Identification Number and Federal Tax Identification Number (Employer Identification Number). Awardees may also be required to provide additional information as deemed appropriate by the County.

3 General rules

3.1 Solicitation for Grant Applications and Grant overview

This Solicitation for Grant Applications is an invitation for Applicants to submit a Grant Application to MASC. It is a means by which MASC and the County may facilitate the acquisition of information related to awarding the Grant and is **NOT A COMMITMENT OR OBLIGATION TO AWARD ANY AMOUNT.**

Nothing in this Application shall obligate County to (i) award any amount; (ii) award any subsequent grants; or (iii) pay or otherwise make any additional distributions.

3.2 Estimated timeline and extension of time

Recommendation of award – May 2023

Anticipated Grant award – June 2023

These dates are subject to revision or cancellation by MASC and the County in their sole and absolute discretion.

3.3 Application submission

Applications will be received by MASC. Submit an electronic copy to grants@mnsports.org or a hard copy to: Attn: MASC- HYSP, 1750 105th Ave. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.

MASC will receive electronic and paper applications during the open application period. While compiling materials from applicants, MASC will review applications to ensure that they contain all necessary and

required information. If information is missing from an application, MASC reserves the right to contact applicants to request that the missing information is included with the final application.

MASC will compile, review, and evaluate applications. After review, application and review materials will be submitted to the County. Records will be stored by the County in adherence with County record retention policies. Award recommendations will be presented to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. The Hennepin County Board of Commissioners will determine which applicants receive awards.

Failure to submit an Application on time may be grounds for rejection of the Application; however, MASC and the County reserve the right, in their sole and absolute discretion, to accept Applications after the Application due date.

3.4 Questions and Pre-application Assistance

Applicants are invited to schedule an individual Technical Assistance (TA) session with program staff to discuss questions specific to individual projects. TA sessions are offered in half hour time slots between the hours of 9am and 4pm, Monday through Friday. Prospective Applicants may sign up for a TA session by contacting MASC at grants@mnsports.org.

3.5 Addenda

The County reserves the right to modify this Solicitation at any time prior to the Application due date. It is the responsibility of each prospective Applicant to assure receipt of all addenda. Applications should be based on this Solicitation document and any formal written addenda. Applicants should not rely on oral statements, or site visits.

3.6 County's right to withdraw, cancel, suspend and/or modify the Solicitation

The County reserves the right to withdraw, cancel, suspend, and/or modify this Solicitation for any reason and at any time with no liability to any prospective Applicant for any costs or expenses incurred in connection with the Solicitation or otherwise.

3.7 Applicant's right to edit or cancel an Application

An Application may be edited or cancelled prior to the Application due date.

3.8 Applications will not be returned

Upon submission, Applications will not be returned. Applications will be stored by Hennepin County for record keeping in accordance with County record keeping protocols.

3.9 Public disclosure of Application documents

Under Minnesota law, applications are private or nonpublic until the proposals are opened on the proposal due date. Once the applications are opened, the name of the Applicant becomes public. All other data in the application is private/nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process. The evaluation process is completed when the County enters into a contract with an Applicant. At that time, all remaining data submitted by all Applicants is public with the exception of data classified as private/non-public trade secret data under Minn. Stat. § 13.37 of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

Applicants must not submit trade secret material, as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37, as part of their application. The County does NOT consider cost or prices to be trade secret material, as defined by the statute. Applicants may present and discuss trade secret information during an interview or demonstration, if applicable.

The Applicant agrees, as a condition of submitting its Application, the County will not, as between the parties, be liable or accountable for any loss or damage which may result from a breach of confidentiality related to the Application. The Applicant agrees to indemnify and hold the County, its officials, agents, and employees harmless from all claims arising out of, resulting from, or in any manner attributable to any violation of any provision of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, including legal fees and disbursements paid or incurred to enforce this provision. This indemnification survives the County's award of a contract. In submitting an application in response to this Solicitation, the Applicant agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the Application is in the County's possession. The County is required to keep all the basic documents related to its contracts, including applications, for a minimum of seven years.

3.10 Applicant's costs

The County shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by Applicant in relation to this Solicitation. Applicant shall bear all costs of Application preparation, submission, and attendance at interviews, or any other activity associated with this Solicitation or otherwise.

3.11 Conflict of interest

The Applicant affirms that to the best of its knowledge the submission of its Application, or any resulting Grant award, does not present an actual or perceived conflict of interest. Strictly for illustration purposes, a personal relationship with a County employee directly or indirectly involved in the Grant process may be a conflict of interest.

The Applicant agrees that should any actual or perceived conflict of interest become known, it will immediately notify the County and will advise whether it will or will not avoid, mitigate, or neutralize the conflict of interest.

The County may make reasonable efforts to avoid, mitigate, or neutralize a conflict of interest by an Applicant. To avoid a conflict of interest by an Applicant, the County may utilize methods including disqualifying an Applicant from eligibility for the Grant or cancelling the Grant if the conflict is discovered

after the Grant has been issued. The County may, at its sole and absolute discretion, waive any conflict of interest.

4 Attachments

4.1 Attachment 1 – Application Format and Content

4.2 Attestation Letter Template

Attachment 1 – Application format and content

Submit an electronic copy to grants@mnsports.org or a hard copy to: Attn: MASC- HYSP, 1750 105th Ave. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.

Applicants must use the application template and attestation letter template when submitting applications. Applicants must adhere to template formatting and content guidelines.

Applications content:

1. Statement Attestations

The Applicant must attest:

- a. That the Applicant has reviewed and agrees to be bound by the Hennepin County Grant Agreement.
- b. The Local Government Unit (LGU) has reviewed this application and believes it is consistent with its program goals. The LGU is prepared to be the fiscal agent for the award, to disburse the funds, and ensure the funds are used as listed in this application.
- c. Disclosure of any conflicts in accordance with the Solicitation.

2. Application

The Application shall contain the following information (and in the same order):

- a. Application Information
 - i. Legal name of Local Government Unit (LGU):
 - ii. LGU Mailing Address:
 - iii. Applicant Contact and Title, Telephone Number, Email address:
 - iv. Signatory Contact and Title, Telephone Number, Email address (*must have signatory authority for the grant amount and/or amount of the matching funds*):
 - v. Collaborating/Partnership Agency:
 - vi. Collaborating Agency Address:
 - vii. Collaborating Agency Contact and Title, Telephone Number, Email address:
 - viii. Delegation of authority – list contacts and/or agencies to whom you wish to delegate authority:
 - ix. Name of Playground:
 - x. Address of playground:
 - xi. Number of estimated youths who will use the playground annually:
- b. Organizational Capacity and Project Information
 - i. A profile of the Applicant and/or partner organization, including, as applicable, the size, organizational structure, history, and mission.
 - ii. Describe the relevance of the Grant to your organization’s mission or the mission of

- your partner organization.
- iii. Describe your proposed playground project.
- c. Collaborations and Partnerships
 - i. For collaborative groups/project partnerships, discuss the intended role each organization will play within the collaboration.
- d. Project Impact and Populations Served
 - i. Describe who will be using the playground and the number of projected youths who will be using the playground on an annual basis.
 - ii. Describe how the proposed playground construction or upgrades will promote inclusivity and accessibility.
 - iii. Describe the impact the playground will have on communities that have been underserved and on populations who have experienced structural and/or institutional inequality.
- e. Project Cost
 - i. Describe the financial need for grant funds, address whether the project will impact financially underserved geographic areas or populations.
 - ii. Describe availability of matching funds or the lack thereof. Address your ability to leverage non-Hennepin funds and in-kind contributions.
 - iii. Describe the sustainability of the proposed project, include ongoing operating funds, environmental impact, and creation of an accessible playground for your community.
- f. Budget
 - i. Total Project Budget
 - ii. Requested Grant Amount and Justification, include descriptions of anticipated items for which you will be requesting reimbursement.
 - iii. Matching Funds
 - iv. Attach a bid from a playground vendor describing the playground equipment and its cost.
- g. Attachments and Additional Information
 - i. Attestation Letter on official letterhead with signature from LGU representative and/or LGU signatory authority
 - ii. If the Attestation Letter is not signed by the signatory authority, include a signed letter of support from the signatory authority on official LGU letterhead
 - iii. Resolution from a local government unit (Example: City Council Resolution)
 - iv. Project budget
 - v. Bid from a playground vendor describing the playground equipment and its cost
 - vi. Demonstration of community support or letters of support (Optional)
 - vii. Additional information deemed relevant to the application (Optional)

Attachment 2 – Attestation letter template

Copy and paste the following attestation letter template onto official letterhead and submit it with signature as part of your application:

(Date)

Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission
Attn: Karah Lodge
1750 105th Avenue NE
Blaine MN 55449

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves as an attestation to the following:

- That I, the Applicant, have reviewed and agree to be bound by the Hennepin County Grant Agreement.
- The Local Government Unit (LGU) has reviewed this application and believes it is consistent with its program goals. The LGU is prepared to be the fiscal agent for the award, to disburse the funds, and ensure the funds are used as listed in this application.
- Disclosure of any conflicts in accordance with the Solicitation:
 - No conflicts of interest
 - The following conflict(s): _____

Sincerely,

(Name and Title)

(Signature with Date)