

# SHELBY COUNTY COMMISSION



## DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### PARK AND RECREATION

### GRANT PROGRAM

**FY 2026**

*Friday, October 24, 2025 is the deadline for applications.*

GrantVantage, an online portal, is now being used to submit the Park and Recreation grant application. Please visit the following link to get started –

<https://shelbycountyalgrants.gvgrantcloud.com/account/register>

# SHELBY COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION GRANT PROGRAM

## PROGRAM SUMMARY

The purpose of the Park and Recreation Grant Program is to provide a means of assisting various entities within Shelby County in developing and/or improving parks and recreational opportunities in the County, especially in supporting the vision and goals of the Shelby County Comprehensive Plan.

This program must ensure an efficient and equitable means of providing funds and services to a countywide constituency, while being mindful of limited public funding resources and public sector legal restrictions. This program is designed to provide coordination between public funds obtained from the Shelby County Commission; municipalities within the County; the public school systems in Shelby County; the Shelby County Parks and Recreation Authority; and private sector funds obtained from various private associations and organizations throughout the County. The Shelby County Department of Development Services will assist the County Manager and the County Commission in determining the amount of county grant funds to be made available for the Park and Recreation Grant Program. Close attention will be given to geographical distribution of projects throughout the County. Priority also is given to applicants applying to ADECA or any other federal or state programs leveraging governmental/public funds.

### Program Information

Funds Available for Park and Recreation Grant	\$375,000
Maximum Grant	\$100,000
County Share	75%
Allowable Matching Source	Cash, In-kind
FY26 Application Deadline	Friday, October 24, 2025
Project Selection	Competitive

## PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Funding through the Shelby County Park and Recreation Grant Program is designed to parallel and complement the recreation facility projects developed by the Shelby County Commission. This general category of funding for parks and recreation facilities is intended to increase the user capacity of existing facilities, acquire property to increase the physical size of existing facilities, and/or to provide for capital development of facilities in public areas un-served by present facilities.

In order to provide the broadest range of recreational services to Shelby County residents, the funding priorities for this Program are as follows:

- New construction of parks, trails, and other recreational facilities; and,
- Increasing user capacity through expansion of existing facilities; and,
- Renovation or replacement of existing recreational fields, equipment and/or facilities; and,
- Combination of new construction and renovation of existing recreational facilities.

## Eligible Projects

Projects must be located on property that is contractually obligated for public use and/or benefit. Operations and/or operating supplies are not eligible for Shelby County Park and Recreation Grants. The following types of facility development projects are eligible for a Shelby County Park and Recreation Grant:

- Trails
- Athletic field projects/complexes
- Passive recreational parks/facilities
- Other recreational facilities that support the vision and goals of the Shelby County Comprehensive Plan

## Project Examples

New Recreational Construction	Renovation / Replacement
New athletic fields, soccer, baseball/softball, etc.	Replace dugouts, scoreboards, bleachers, press boxes, etc.
Trails for walking, hiking, running or biking	Replace playground equipment such as swings or existing units or surface materials and related items
New athletic buildings or structures, press boxes, restrooms, or new bleachers that increase capacity	Field Maintenance such as top-dressing or re-grading of fields, aeration, or replacing existing irrigation
New light fixtures that increase lighting functionality (foot candles/safety enhancements)	Replacement of existing light fixtures that increase lighting functionality (foot candles/safety enhancements)
New playground equipment that increases the capacity	Replacement equipment that increases the capacity

## Who Can Apply

Any organization from the following list may apply for a Shelby County Park and Recreation Grant:

- Municipalities within Shelby County
- All public school systems within Shelby County
- Public Agency property owners
- Shelby County-area non-profit athletic or recreational associations

Applicants must be a Shelby County registered vendor or able to meet vendor requirements. Prospective applicants are not eligible to apply if the entity has an open Park and Recreation Grant.

## Matching Requirement

The County share for the Park and Recreation Grant is up to 75 percent (75%) of the total eligible project costs up to the grant maximum. The non-County share of at least 25 percent (25%) may come from State, local or private sources. In order to utilize the available grant funds in this program to the greatest extent possible, a matching requirement is necessary for all grant awards. The sponsor shall demonstrate the project is financially feasible and the sponsor has the resources and capabilities to facilitate the project to completion, especially if the amount to complete the project exceeds the matching requirement.

***The maximum amount that can be applied for is \$100,000.***

***Proof of matching funds is required at the time of application.*** Applicant must identify matching fund sources and amounts at the time of application with one or more of the following: current organization financial balance sheets, IRS form 990, a letter of credit from a financial institution or any other documentation deemed appropriate by Shelby County. In-kind services identified as matching fund source must be accurately documented as to dollar amount of value.

## Project Matching Examples

- A. EXAMPLE:** A City or local non-profit recreational organization requests assistance to develop an athletic field on property owned by the Shelby County Board of Education. The Board of Education approves the project and agrees to take possession of the facilities upon construction or leases the field to the entity for public operation and use. Total project cost = \$80,000. Shelby County may fund up to a maximum of \$60,000 for the project, provided the project meets all criteria within the application process.
- B. EXAMPLE:** A local non-profit recreational trail organization requests assistance to develop Phase II of an existing unpaved natural trail utilizing easements dedicated to a City. The City agrees to maintain the trail easement upon completion of the trail. Total project cost = \$125,000. Shelby County may fund up to a maximum of \$93,750 for the project, provided the project meets all criteria within the application process.
- C. EXAMPLE:** A local non-profit requests assistance on replacing the bleachers at a baseball field, the procurement of replacement playground surfacing and swing set seats/cabling and drainage improvements at an existing city park: Total project cost = \$210,000. Shelby County may fund up to 75 percent of the total project cost, up to a maximum of \$100,000. Although 75 percent of the project cost is \$157,500, the maximum funding for this type of project is \$100,000, provided the project meets all criteria within the application process.

All facilities that receive grant funding shall have policies and practices that allow all Shelby County residents access to facilities. The applicable entities shall develop and administer the participation and/or access guidelines or requirements.

**Note:** Costs for design, planning, or routine maintenance are not eligible. Safety enhancements for public spaces are not eligible, such as security cameras.

## **Funding Review Process**

Applications must be submitted by the deadline in order for Shelby County to analyze each funding request. A competitive process has been developed to evaluate applications.

Grant applications shall be submitted to the Shelby County Department of Development Services.

Evaluation of each application will be made to ensure the applicant and the proposal meet eligibility and guideline requirements. Applications received will be evaluated according to the effectiveness with which the proposal furthers the Shelby County Comprehensive Plan. Funding decisions will be based on this evaluation; however, award amounts will in part be based upon availability of program funds.

Proposals recommended for award will then be submitted to the County Manager for consideration and then submitted to the County Commission for final approval. Final decisions remain at the discretion of the Shelby County Commission.

The Department of Development Services will contact grantees upon County Commission approval and provide contracts for review and execution. All grant assurances and deliverables must be provided prior to the execution of the grant contracts.

The grant funds will not be disbursed until the Department of Development Services receives a copy of the executed construction contract and Notice to Proceed or documentation of eligible reimbursable expenses.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

The Shelby County Department of Development Services will make available to local governments, public educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and other eligible organizations the guidelines and application form.

Grant amounts awarded will be contingent upon the actual number of qualified applications received and the availability of grant funding within the county fiscal year budget. In the event that the dollar amount requested by applicants exceeds the overall amount of funds available, the Shelby County Commission reserves the right to award an amount less than requested.

An applicant may receive no more than one Park and Recreation Grant per fiscal year and may submit only one application per grant cycle. An applicant not receiving an award may reapply at the next funding cycle, or at any subsequent time. This reapplication does not guarantee funding of the application request. An applicant may only receive one Park and Recreation Grant award for *the project, elements or item(s) described in the application*; however, large projects may be broken into phases and each phase submitted in multiple grant cycles.

An applicant must complete the County Grant Program Application and, when necessary, provide additional information. A location map and sketch plan must be included with each application.

For larger, more costly projects, the sponsor should identify phasing options to facilitate funding. By isolating development phases, the sponsor stands a better chance of receiving funding than if an "all or nothing" concept is proposed.

Applicant must identify matching fund sources and amounts at the time of application with one or more of the following: current organization financial balance sheets, IRS form 990, a letter of credit from a financial institution or any other documentation deemed appropriate by Shelby County. The sponsor shall provide the non-profit designation letter from the IRS or the applicable incorporation papers under the Alabama Non-Profit Corporation Act as certification of an eligible organization to receive grant funds.

Award funds will not be disbursed until the Department of Development Services receives a copy of the executed construction contract and Notice to Proceed or documentation of eligible reimbursable expenses. Status reports of the deliverables of the project, project/construction reports and/or a final report may be required as outlined in the executed grant agreement.

An online portal GrantVantage is now being used to submit the Park and Recreation grant application. Please visit the following link to get started.

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Use the following link for the step-by-step applicant guide.

<https://www.shelbyal.com/DocumentCenter/View/5204/PY-2025-Application-Workshop-Step-by-Step-Guide>

Please direct any questions regarding the Shelby County Park and Recreation Grant Program to Christie Hester, Director of Development Services, at 205-620-6623.