

Legislative Update



THE LATEST LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AFFECTING PARKS, RECREATION and CONSERVATION

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TO: IAPD Members

FROM: Peter Murphy, Esq., CAE, IOM, IAPD President and CEO
Jason Anselment, IAPD Legal/Legislative Counsel

RE: Great News!

More than \$8 Million in Trail and Bike Path Grants Available

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has announced that grant applications will be accepted through **March 14, 2019**, for the Illinois Bicycle Path (Bike Path), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Grant Programs.

The Bike Path Grant Program provides financial assistance to eligible local units of government to assist with the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of public off-road, non-motorized bicycle paths and directly related support facilities. Agencies that apply for projects that accommodate additional trail users will receive special consideration in the review of grant applications.

The Bike Path program will reimburse up to **50 percent of total approved project costs** up to the maximum allowable cost. The remainder of the costs will be borne by the project sponsor.

The program has approximately \$6.5 million available for project assistance. There is a \$200,000 maximum grant amount for development projects, but there is no maximum for acquisition projects.

Project applications are limited to land acquisition or trail development along a single trail corridor. Looped trails within a single parcel or park site are not eligible for Bike Path funding. These projects, however, may be eligible for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The only exceptions are looped trails located

within very large preserves. Bicycle routes sharing existing roadway surfaces are also not eligible for funding consideration under this program.

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a reimbursement grant program that provides **80 percent of project funding with a required 20 percent local match**. This grant program is federally funded and is administered by the IDNR in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The funds can be used to assist local governments in the rehabilitation, development, maintenance, and acquisition of recreational trails and related facilities.

The trails may be motorized, non-motorized, or multiple use trails. RTP funds can also be used for environmental protection and safety education projects related to trails.

This program is funded through the transfer of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in off-highway vehicles used for recreational purposes. The program generally has **\$1.5 million available for grants**, with a maximum development grant amount of \$200,000. There is no maximum on acquisition grants.

The primary purpose of the **Off-Highway Vehicle Recreational Trails Program (OHV)** is to provide financial aid to government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and other eligible groups or individuals to develop, operate, maintain, and acquire land for OHV parks, trails and trail side facilities that are open and accessible to the public in Illinois, and to restore areas damaged by unauthorized OHV use.

Funds for the grant program are derived from revenue generated in the State Treasurer's "Off-Highway Vehicle Trails Fund." OHV will reimburse up to 100 percent of total approved project costs up to the maximum. If necessary, the remainder of the costs will be borne by the project sponsor.

OHV is a reimbursement program, meaning that a project sponsor must have sufficient cash, donations, or eligible in-kind services to pay for work, and then be paid back the grant percentage after approval of a reimbursement request. The OHV program will have approximately \$690,000 available for grants in 2019. There are no maximum grant amounts.

Grant applications must be submitted to the IDNR by **5:00 p.m. on March 14, 2019**.

A hyperlink to the IDNR's Notice of Funding which contains additional information can be accessed [here](#) by clicking on:

- "List of Agencies," then by clicking on
- "Department of Natural Resources" then by clicking on

- The specific grant program.

IMPORTANT: ALL applicants must be registered with GATA online grant system prior to the application deadline date. For more information on this process, please [click here](#).

Consult the IDNR website at www.dnr.illinois.gov for more information or call the IDNR Grants main line at (217) 782-7481.