



Seattle Park District Major Projects Challenge Fund

Building for the Future

\$1,600,000 per year

Build for the Future is one of the primary areas of focus for the Seattle Park District. *Part of Building for the Future* includes the Major Projects Challenge Fund. The purpose of the Major Projects Challenge Fund is to provide a funding match, to fund a “major project” on Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) property. The Major Projects Challenge Fund will provide City funding to leverage community-generated funding for renovation of parks and park facilities where other City funding is unavailable.

Purposely defined loosely, it is envisioned that a “major project” is a significant improvement or renovation to an existing SPR owned site or facility. It should significantly expand the life and usability of the subject facility such that it provides more opportunities for people to make use of the facility. The combination of Major Projects Challenge Fund money and community-generated money will allow for major projects to be accomplished throughout the city.

Seattle Parks and Recreation staff and the Park District Citizens Oversight Committee developed fair and equitable criteria which will result in the implementation of an inclusive process that ensures historically underserved and underrepresented communities will have opportunities to access this fund. A portion of funding will be allocated to assist diverse communities and organizations that lack resources for a match.

An annual competitive application process will prioritize projects to ensure projects meet the qualification of aligning with our park and recreation mission, guaranteeing public access, leveraging non-City funds, and other pertinent criteria.

TIMELINE

- **January – March 2016** – Public Outreach
- **March 31, 2016** – **Proposal Letters Due**
- **April – May 2016** – Staff review of applications
- **June 2016** – Park District Oversight Committee review and recommendation to Superintendent
- **July 2016** – Funds awarded to project. Projects will be managed by SPR.

APPLICATION PROCESS

There is no formal application. The applicant should submit a two to three page proposal letter which clearly outlines the project and indicates how the project meets criteria a – h. Drawings, letters of support and other materials can be submitted as attachments to the initial proposal letter although they are not necessary. Electronic submittals are encouraged and should include:

- Project description
- Fund amount request
 - Note - the project budget should include project management costs and contingencies
- Description of proposed match
- Description of how the proposal meets the criteria outlined below

The application process will prioritize community-initiated projects that have a parks-and-recreation mission, encourage public access, leverage non-City funds, and are on a Seattle Parks and Recreation property and/or a Seattle Parks and Recreation owned facility.

Other criteria that the projects must meet are listed below. The \$2.2 million renovation of the Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center completed in 2007 in partnership with the Mount Baker Boating Advisory Council is a good example of a major project which would have been considered for the Major Projects Challenge Fund.

CRITERIA

- a.** Is it on Seattle Parks and Recreation owned property and/or a SPR owned facility?

Rationale: Since the funds come through the Park District, they should be spent directly on SPR property and/or an SPR owned facility. Also, SPR will manage the project.

- b.** Is it an identified capital need at a park or park facility that is lacking in funding; is it a large scale project that may be funded from a variety of public and private funding sources with a total construction cost estimated to be in excess of \$2 million? It should be a single project such as building renovation or expansion, or a facility improvement.

Rationale: There are other City funding sources such as the Neighborhood Matching funds available for smaller projects. The idea is that this funding should go to a significant project that improves or expands an existing facility. What is important is that the project be significant enough to provide long term value to the greater community.

- c.** What is the match? How does the project leverage or have the potential to leverage other resources through the actions of other public agencies, funding from public, private or philanthropic partners, and/or in-kind contributions of time and energy from citizen volunteers?

Rationale: For the actual construction phase of the project, the Major Project Challenge Fund should be leveraged with a 50% match but the match amount could be less and/or provided by other than a monetary match. Ideally, the applicant would be able to raise 50% (or more) of the project cost and the fund would fill the gap to bring the project up to 100% funding. There may be situations where there is significant community support for a project but the applicant doesn't have the resources and/or connections to provide the full 50/50 match. In those situations, this criterion is intended to be flexible in setting a target goal for a match, but not an absolute requirement. There may also be situations where the applicant is unable to identify any match. In those situations, it may be up to SPR staff to step in and help the community with the funding process. If no other funding sources are identified during the initial submittal, it will be incumbent on staff to work with the applicant on funding in advance of submitting the formal application.

For the initial phase of planning and design where SPR would make smaller amounts available in the range of \$20,000 – \$50,000 for planning and/or design work, there still should be some sort of match. The percentage and form of the match could be more flexible at this initial phase to get a project ready to apply for the larger construction amount.

- d. Does the project demonstrate a high degree of community support or involvement as demonstrated through a public review process and/or is the project consistent with approved plans, such as a neighborhood, community council or other recent planning documents?

Rationale: We are looking to fill an established/identified need at a particular facility. Ideally the project would have been previously identified in some prior planning work done by SPR or another government agency, or the community through a community process. A newly identified need/project could be considered, but the proposal will likely have more support if the project fills a long standing gap/need.

- e. Does the project serve an underserved community?

Rationale: SPR has a commitment to racial equity and social justice. This funding is an opportunity to target improvement(s) to SPR facilities in underserved communities where there is an identified need but no or limited funding sources. These areas deserve special consideration if our goal is to provide equal access to all. SPR staff will be working to ensure that all communities are aware of this funding program and are provided the resources necessary to identify projects and prepare a competitive application. SPR staff will work with underserved communities during the initial application stage to establish a recommended match that will be vetted by the oversight committee. The match could be other funding source(s) or something else such as donated services.

- f. Does the proposal restore or significantly extend the life of a current park or facility?

Rationale: In keeping with the “fix it first” mantra of the Park District, we are looking for projects that make improvements to existing facilities. The purpose of this challenge funding is not to undertake new capital projects but to make improvements to or expansion of existing parks or facilities.

- g. What potential effects does the project have on the City’s maintenance and operating costs?

Rationale: We will want to see how the proposed improvement/expansion impacts our maintenance and operating costs at the subject facility. Part of the review of any proposal will be SPR staff determination of potential added facility costs. SPR staff is better suited than any awardee to undertake this detailed analysis and it should be part of the proposal/application review. That said, the initial funding request should include a rough order of magnitude of the additional maintenance and operating costs of an improved/expanded facility; i.e., what are existing costs and what are costs anticipated to be with the expanded or renovated facility. These costs could shift as a design evolves and thus just serve as a baseline in reviewing any proposed application.

- h. What is the overall benefit of the project to the community?

Rationale: We will want to see the project and hence the expenditure benefit as many people as possible.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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