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PRESS RELEASE

DCA Awards \$25 Million in Local Recreation Improvement Grants to 372 Local Governments Across the State Grant Funding Will Help Improve Municipal and County Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Local Stadiums

TRENTON, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs’ (DCA) Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) today announced the award of \$25 million in Local Recreation Improvement Grants to counties, municipalities, and school districts across New Jersey to ensure public access to quality outdoor space and recreational facilities. The grants were awarded to 372 local governments after a competitive application process.

This represents the highest number of local governments to receive grants in the three years the program has been operating.

“DCA recognizes that a big part of what makes a community healthy and dynamic is having well-maintained public places for outdoor activities. For three years running, the Department has provided grants to local governments to help them upgrade their parks, playgrounds, sports fields, and other recreational spaces,” said DCA Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suárez. “We are proud of this investment in our communities because we know the positive impact it has on people’s physical and mental well-being.”

Grant recipients will use the funding to help cover costs associated with updating community centers, playgrounds, pools, fields, walking or bicycle trails, rail trails, multi-sport courts, and recreational facilities. The grants can also be utilized for project development professional services such as engineering and architectural costs; equipment costs including playgrounds or bleachers for stadiums or community theaters; and environmental remediation costs required to prepare recreation sites for use.

A full list of the recipients, including grant award and grant project, is posted at <https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/lrigrants.shtml> on the DCA website.

A copy of the FY 2024 Local Recreation Improvement Grant Management Guidelines can also be found at: <https://www.nj.gov/dca/dlgs/programs/lrigrants.shtml>.

To qualify for grant funding, applicants had to:

- Describe the intended use of grant funding for improvement or repair of a specific local recreation site;
- Identify any previously encountered obstacles to repair or improve the recreation site;
- Demonstrate their ability to complete the proposed project and provide project management and oversight for all activities and fiscal operations;
- List key personnel and/or the outside consultant that will be managing the grant funds and proposed project;
- Provide a cost breakdown of the project;
- Submit a governing body resolution acknowledging and approving any grant application and the proposed plan or design for the recreation space or community facility for which funding is sought; and
- Certify that the property where improvements will be made is owned by the county, municipality, or school district.

Grant applications were evaluated based on distressed community ranking, financial need, project feasibility, local match commitment, and scope of impact.

The Local Recreation Improvement Grants are reimbursement based. There is no advance payment or drawdown of grant funds. Eligible costs are reimbursed to the local government when it submits evidence of payment for qualifying expenses to DCA.

The Division of Local Government Services provides technical and financial assistance in budgeting, financial reporting, joint services, purchasing, and management issues to all municipalities of the State of New Jersey.

DCA offers a wide range of programs and services, including local government management and finance, affordable housing production, fire safety, building safety, community planning and development, disaster recovery and mitigation, and information privacy.

For more information about DCA, visit <https://nj.gov/dca/> or follow the Department on social media:



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