



Salt Lake County Recreation Bond Guidelines & Policies

Apply Online: <https://www.saltlakecounty.gov/community-services/recreation-bond/>

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Updated on April 15, 2026

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. BACKGROUND

Salt Lake County voters initially authorized the Zoo, Arts, and Parks (ZAP) tax in 1996. The revenue is used in accordance with legislatively authorized and formula-prescribed purposes. While most funds are directly distributed by Salt Lake County to Zoological, ZAP Tier I, and ZAP Tier II organizations, 30% of the total revenue is held by the County and used for Parks. In coordination with each authorization by the voters for ZAP, Salt Lake County has also placed general obligation (GO) bonds on the ballot. These bonds are used for new parks, trails, and other eligible facilities. GO bonds were issued for each renewal period associated with ZAP, including a \$50 million issuance in 1998, a \$65 million issuance in 2007, and a \$90 million issuance in 2016, \$59 million of which was used to build 11 new projects. For each debt issuance, the duration of the bonds matched the authorized duration of the ZAP tax. Voters re-authorized the ZAP tax in 2024, and Salt Lake County intends to seek approval of a corresponding GO bond in the 2026 election cycle.

2. ELIGIBILITY

As the project owner or originator, the applying organization must be a local government and must satisfy the following requirements.

- a. **Recreation Bond Purpose** - Projects must have a recreational purpose that serves all residents within Salt Lake County at the same level or fee, regardless of city of residence. A recreation facility is defined as any publicly owned park, campground, marina, dock, golf course, water park, historic park, bicycle trails, or other recreation-related facility. Projects can include new facilities, a new phase of construction for a facility, or existing facilities that need upgrades and/or repairs.
- b. **Publicly Owned** - Proposed projects using Park and Recreation bond proceeds must meet the requirements of [Utah Code Ann. §§ 11-14-103\(b\)](#) which requires the Issuer to either alone or jointly with one or more other local political subdivisions have an interest in the property. In addition, any project that is used or managed by a non-governmental person, within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code 141, the management contract must meet the safe harbor provisions outlined in [IRS Rev. Proc. 2017-13](#). The public must be able to access the project's facility as visitors, spectators, or participants.
- c. **County Located** - The applicant and the project must be physically located within Salt Lake County.
- d. **Project Start Date** - The project's start date must be after January 1, 2027. Applications should clarify the project's readiness and an estimated start date. Projects should be completed within ten years.
- e. **Lifespan** – The project must have a projected useful life of at least ten years.
- f. **Matching Funds** - Applicants must outline the entire project budget and funding sources. Priority is given to applicants who can demonstrate matching funds. Secured funding sources such as cash on hand, restricted pledges, and other awarded grants are considered matching funds for purposes of project reimbursement by the Recreation Bond Program.

The following expenses do not qualify for Recreation Bond funding:

- **Portable furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) purchases**
- **Agency overhead expenses, including payroll costs**
- **Operational costs or programmatic costs**

3. FUNDING TYPE

The Recreation Bond Program is a reimbursement grant. Through this program, eligible organizations can apply for funding for capital expenses. Awarded projects will be reimbursed for eligible expenses up to the approved funding amount.

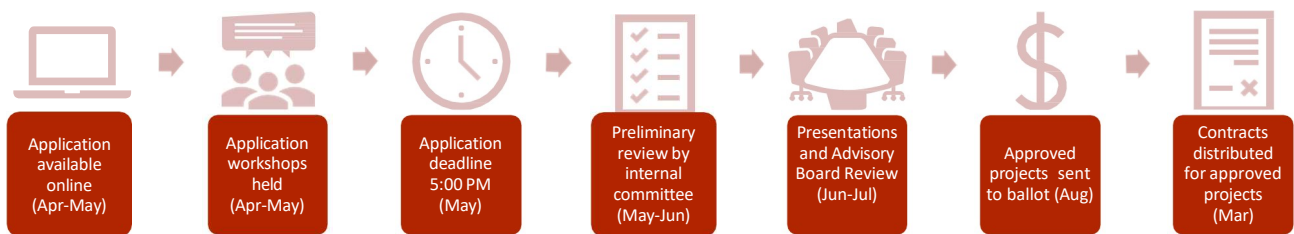
- **Capital Funding** may be used for new construction, renovations, or remodeling expenses in an existing facility, and must directly improve the experience for patrons and/or residents.
 - The capital expense requests will be evaluated using standard GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, meaning those conventions, rules, procedures, and practices adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants).
 - Each capital project location requires a unique project application.
 - Projects with construction design and/or construction documents completed and submitted at the time of application may be more highly ranked.

Applying and receiving a Recreation Bond Advisory Board recommendation for funding **does not guarantee funding for projects**. Funding recommendations are presented to the Salt Lake County Council for approval and then must be included on the ballot in the November election. If the bond is approved in the election, funding will then be considered secure.

Applicants will receive notification of approved funding after the bond has passed in the election.

4. RECREATION BOND TIMELINE

Please note that, as part of the Recreation Bond Advisory Board review process, eligible applicants will be asked to present their projects in person.



Exact dates will be noted and communicated within the application year.

RECREATION BOND PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA

Salt Lake County is a large and diverse geographic area, encompassing 742 square miles. Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation has planned for and envisioned regional parks, recreation facilities, and trail systems throughout the valley. There is great demand with a rapidly growing population, changing attitudes, new perspectives, and evolving lifestyles. It is imperative that opportunities are seized today to meet future needs.

The Parks, Recreation, and Trails Support Program encourages any qualified government or business to apply for consideration of funding for the construction, renovation, or study of publicly owned and operated Parks, Recreation, or Trail amenities and/or facilities. Through this Parks, Recreation, and Trails Support Program, eligible organizations can apply for funding for capital expenses related to a project.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS SUPPORT PROGRAM VISION

The primary purpose of the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Support Program is to guide the future development of parks and recreation facilities in Salt Lake County and to establish decision-making criteria. The plan is a focused vision of what is needed in the future. It provides substantial flexibility to change direction as opportunities shift.

Based in part on acquired expertise, countywide perspective, and focus on addressing regional concerns that cross municipal boundaries, Salt Lake County is positioned to provide leadership for this vision in the planning and development of parks and recreation facilities.

Applicants should align their project requests to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Support Program Vision and Plan. A copy of the Plan is located on the Recreation Bond website. Other regional and specific plans for recreation, parks, and trails are found on the Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation [website](#).

PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS SUPPORT PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

- To ensure the legacy of parks and recreation throughout the County.
- To value professional parks and recreation organizations, community parks, recreation, trails organizations, and community participation.
- To enable and enhance the development of parks, recreation, and trail systems.
- To reflect and address the current and future needs of communities throughout the County.
- To only support projects that demonstrate readiness, feasibility, and sustainability through long-term secure funding streams.
- To value the need for a wide range of facility types and trends.
- To support projects that address the needed upgrades of existing facilities and the construction of new facilities.
- To support projects that enhance the ability of parks, recreation, and trail organizations to improve, expand, and/or sustain programming.
- To support projects exploring new ways to increase programming for nature and outdoor education.

- To implement an inclusive and fair process for planning, locating, funding, and developing County- supported parks and recreation facilities and trail systems.
- To encourage projects that foster collaboration, regional partnerships, and shared funding.

RECREATION BOND CATEGORIES

There are five different categories within the Recreation Bond Support Program.

1. **Land Acquisition** – Acquiring land to meet demonstrated increased demand for parks, open spaces, trails, golf courses, multipurpose fields, and recreation facilities.
2. **New Recreation Facility/Amenity** – Filling service gaps for high-growth areas and underserved neighborhoods. These projects should provide different services and programming than their existing counterparts in the system expanding options and resources for the community and beyond providing a regional benefit.
3. **Park Development** – Creating new parks to meet increasing demand or helping existing regional parks to reach their full potential through completion of existing original plans. Projects should focus on the surrounding area’s needs rather than including every possible amenity.
4. **Recreation Facility Renovation/Remodel** – Focusing on underdeveloped projects or those that have incomplete future phases/expansions that were planned from the outset, as well as those facilities that are approaching end-of-life and require rehabilitation.
5. **Trails** – Developing regional trails and preserving open spaces with a focus on conserving native landscapes, expanding existing preserves, or completing unfinished trails. Recreation Bond funding may also be used to assist municipalities in securing and developing local trail routes.

CRITERIA FOR PRIORITIZATION

Each eligible project will be judged on specific criteria for prioritization.

- **Strategic Fit** – Aligns with the priorities of the 2025 Trails, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan. This includes addressing needs identified in recreation programming studies; addressing needs identified by Park Operations or Golf; and property ownership, easement, and right-of-way status.
- **Collaborative Funding** – Leverages additional resources, partnerships, or co-investments to maximize impact. Projects with a high level of matching funds secured will be scored more positively than those with low or no matching funds.
- **Serving Growth & Need** – Represents geographic diversity and community needs. Projects that are directly aligned with this criterion will be in a Planning Area experiencing higher projected population growth and/or elevated demographic need *and* directly address documented gaps identified in the Master Plan.
- **Condition** – Demonstrates need for repairs or upgrades to stay safe, accessible, and functional. Projects will be ranked from “Excellent” for sites in good or excellent condition with no functional limitations to “Critical Condition/Functional Failure” for sites that have exceeded useful life, and major failures or closures are present or imminent.



- **Completion** – Advances partially completed sites. Projects will be ranked from “Early Stage,” indicating that they are 0-20% complete, to “Near Completion,” with the project requiring minimal development and at 81-99% completion.
- **Operational Impact** – Manages maintenance demands and demonstrates responsible system growth. Ideal projects will replace or eliminate existing infrastructure that requires ongoing maintenance, reducing overall maintenance obligations and requiring no new permanent FTEs.
- **Sustainability** – Demonstrates environmental efficiency. This may include addressing environmental issues, energy conservation, water conservation/quality, or qualification for a LEED certification.

APPLICATION AND DOCUMENTATION

The application is open from April 20 to May 22, 2026. Applicants can access the application and supplemental forms on the Recreation Bond Program website.

1. APPLICATION

In 2026, Salt Lake County implemented a new online grant application tool called **Submittable**. Please find a how-to guideline in Addendum 1. Submittable is relatively user-friendly and intuitive. However, there are some nuances. We recommend the orientation video: [Getting Started as a New Submitter | Submittable Help Center](#). Note that this is a 6-minute video general orientation to the platform.

To ensure applications are eligible before full submission, several required eligibility questions must be completed. If the eligibility requirements are not met, the applicant will receive immediate notification, and the input information will be erased. If the eligibility requirements are satisfied, you will receive access to the full application. A copy of the application questions is available on the Recreation Bond Program website.

2. SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTATION LIST

All projects are required to submit a Recreation Bond Project Budget Worksheet and encouraged to submit the following documentation:

- Organizational budget (three years of the organization's budget, including the current budget year)
- Evidence of local support and community need (may include feasibility study results if applicable, press coverage, support letters from community members and arts & cultural organizations in the area, etc.)
- Deed or contract to purchase property
- Construction information documents, a construction cost estimate by a qualified professional, and a master construction budget by a qualified professional.

3. RECREATION BOND PROJECT BUDGET WORKSHEET

Each project must have a complete Recreation Bond Project Budget Worksheet. This worksheet is on the [Recreation Bond Project Website](#). The worksheet includes the requested funding amount, the total project budget, and the total of other funding. The detailed project budget should include the project's total cost, including expenses that are not Recreation Bond eligible. There is also a section to provide information on other funding sources.

RECREATION BOND ADVISORY BOARD OVERVIEW

1. ADVISORY BOARD PURPOSE

The purpose of the Board shall be to advise the County Council on the expenditure of Recreation Bond funds pursuant to State statute and County ordinance in Salt Lake County. The Recreation Bond Advisory Board's role is to review all eligible applications and funding requests to make recommendations to the Salt Lake County Council.

2. BOARD COMPOSITION

The Recreation Bond Advisory Board is composed of 16 members chosen by the Salt Lake County Council:

- Five members of the public-at-large.
- Four mayors chosen by the municipal members of the Salt Lake Council of Governments
- Two Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members
- One Salt Lake County Open Space Trust Fund Advisory Committee member
- Parks and Recreation Division Director
- Facilities Director or Associate Director
- Community Services Department Director (non-voting)
- ZAP Program Director (non-voting)

In alignment with countywide board practices, Advisory Board members disclose conflicts of interest and refrain from acts prohibited by the Salt Lake County Conflict of Interest policy. The Advisory Board relies on the experience, knowledge, and expertise of its fellow members as it provides an equitable, unbiased review for each applicant.

3. BOARD MEETINGS

The Recreation Bond Advisory Board is a public body and must comply with the Utah Open Meetings Act, which ensures that public bodies conduct business, take actions, and make deliberations openly. Therefore, all Advisory Board meetings with a quorum are considered an open public meeting, unless they are closed for an allowable reason. Business conducted by the Recreation Bond Advisory Board generally does not meet the criteria for closed meetings. Under the practices and guidelines established by the Utah Open Meetings Act, meeting agendas are made available no later than 24 hours before an open public meeting. Typically, within 5 business days of the meeting, minutes and recorded audio are posted. The meeting agendas, minutes, and recorded audio are posted publicly on the following site: [Public Notice Website](#). Under the practices and guidelines established by the Government Records Access and Management (GRAMA) Act, open meeting agendas, minutes, recorded audio, and application forms may be requested.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

Advisory Board members are required to maintain confidentiality during the review process. They



may not share protected information from an application or the review process, including, but not limited to, personal identifying information, business strategy, organizational finances, funding decisions, and board discussions. In the event an Advisory Board member has information regarding an applicant that is not public knowledge and was not disclosed in the application, the member is not permitted to share that information during the review process. Application information is not considered public record until the Salt Lake County Council approves the Advisory Boards' funding recommendations.

REVIEW PROCESS

All applications submitted by the deadline will go through a three-step review process.

1. Recreation Bond Administrative Staff Review (May-June)
 - Eligibility Check and Application Completeness
2. Advisory Board Review (June-July)
 - Application Review
 - Recreation Bond Applicant Presentations
 - Final Review: Final Deliberations – Financial Reviews and Funding Recommendations
3. Salt Lake County Council Review and Approval with submission for the November ballot (August)

If a portion of the application requires clarification, the Community Services Recreation Bond grant administrator will contact the applicant via Submittable with a clarification notification that will require a written response within 10 business days.

After careful review and deliberation on the submitted applications and accompanying documentation, the Recreation Bond Advisory Board submits its written funding recommendations to the Salt Lake County Council, identifying the organizations selected to receive Recreation Bond funding and recommending the grant amount to be distributed to each organization.

Preliminary approval notifications will be sent to applicants after the Recreation Bond Advisory Board has made its final funding recommendations, but before Salt Lake County Council's review and approval. These notifications are courtesy; they are not final grant award approval notifications. The Community Services Department will notify declined applicants at this time.

After Council approval, Salt Lake County will submit the Bond to be included on the ballot in November. Election results will be certified at the Board of Canvassers meeting on November 18, 2026. Once election results have been certified by the Recorder, applicants will be sent a final note indicating if they have received funding and the amount they have received.

POST-AWARD GRANT ADMINISTRATION

Grantees are required to fulfill all obligations within Grant Administration as articulated below. Failure to do so could impact the disbursement of funding. Contact Community Services with any questions or concerns regarding fulfilling these requirements. Forms and tutorials are available online.

1. CONTRACTS

Applications are officially approved after the bond passes in the general election in November and the Salt Lake County Council approves the full budget in December. Contracts will be delivered to Recreation Bond recipients by the end of March.

2. ANNUAL AND FINAL PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

A Recreation Bond Project Status report is due on December 31 each year the project is open. Once the project is complete and the final reimbursement processed, a final status report is due, but no later than the deadline listed in the executed contract.

Both reports use the same form but have different instructions. Read each section header for details. Additionally, the final status report requires a general ledger. A general ledger is a detailed list of financial transactions for the project. The ledger total must equal the expenses reported in the final Recreation Bond Project Status Report.

3. REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

The Recreation Bond is a reimbursement grant up to the amount awarded for eligible project costs, not a guaranteed contribution. Applicants may apply for reimbursement after their Recreation Bond agreement is fully executed. A partial reimbursement of the Recreation Bond grant is permitted before the full amount of matching funds is met, however reimbursements will not be disbursed until after the contract has been fully executed by both the recipient and Salt Lake County.

A completed Recreation Bond Reimbursement Form and a detailed invoice/receipt are required for each reimbursement request. Expenses must align with the scope of work in the approved application. Further, goods purchased or services received must be after January 1, 2027, and after the applicant has received notice to proceed to be eligible.

4. PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

Grantees are responsible for updating contact information via Submittable in case of a staff change. Failure to provide current information may result in delays in the delivery of important reminders or requests for information. Refer to Addendum 1 for instructions on transferring ownership of your application in Submittable.



CONTACT INFORMATION

SALT LAKE COUNTY RECREATION BOND SUPPORT PROGRAM

<https://www.saltlakecounty.gov/community-services/recreation-bond/>

Salt Lake County Government Center
2001 S State St., N3-200
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Hours

Monday through Friday
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ADDENDUM 1

SUBMITTABLE DIRECTIONS

When you are ready to start the application process, create or log in to your account on Submittable. You will complete the Eligibility, Application, and Report forms on the platform.

1. NAVIGATING SUBMITTABLE

Submittable is relatively user-friendly and intuitive to use. However, there are some nuances. We recommend that you view the orientation video here: [Getting Started as a New Submitter | Submittable Help Center](#). Note that the 6-minute video is a general orientation to the platform.

2. CREATE YOUR SUBMITTABLE ACCOUNT AND SIGN IN

- Step 1: Navigate to Submittable.com and click the “Sign-In” button on the top right side of the screen. On the next page, select the “Submittable” software to sign in.
- Step 2: Follow the on-screen prompts to create an account or sign in. We recommend creating a Submittable account rather than using Google or Facebook credentials. After signing in, you will be directed to the “My Submissions” page.
- Step 3: Choose an application to apply for. The Submittable Portal to the [Recreation Bond Program Application is found here](#). If you have already started an application, it will be listed in your profile.

3. UPDATING YOUR ACCOUNT

Once you’ve created an account and logged in, you may update details such as your name, address, phone number, and password in the personal settings section of your profile by clicking your profile icon on the top right of the screen. You may also update the settings section to personalize your experience with Submittable. Read the article to learn more here: [Update My Profile | Submittable Help Center](#)

4. ORGANIZATION PROFILE

When you begin the application process on the Salt Lake County Submittable page, you will be prompted to apply on behalf of a registered organization. The search field retrieves your organization’s information from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) database via Candid, a nonprofit directory. Connecting your application to a specific organization is an important step in the eligibility check process and helps keep your organization’s submissions organized; however, this step is optional. For municipality-based applicants, skip this step since you will not find your organization in the Candid database.

To find your organization, you may search using the official organization name or its Employer Identification Number (EIN) as issued by the IRS. When searching by name, be as specific as possible. Ensure that your organization’s profile matches the appropriate EIN before proceeding. For a higher education institution division or department, use the university’s EIN profile. If you are a contract grant writer and apply on behalf of multiple organizations, it will be important for you to change your organization profile each time you begin a new application. Refer to the article below on navigating the change. You do not need to create separate accounts for each application.

If you have trouble finding the appropriate organization profile or want to learn more about the

organization search process, read the following help article: [Organization Search | Submittable Help Center](#). If you still have questions, contact the Recreation Bond grant administrator.

5. SUBMISSION OWNERS, COLLABORATORS, AND TRANSFERRING OWNERSHIP

We recommend that organizations select an individual as a Submission Owner responsible for submitting the Application on the organization's behalf. This individual will also be the primary contact for your application for the Recreation Bond. We strongly recommend that each application has at least one collaborator.

- **Submission Owner:** As Submission Owner, you may add collaborators to the Application form at any time before submission. At the top of any form, you will see an option to Manage Collaborators, where you may add more people through email invitations. Collaborators can save drafts and edit but not submit or correspond with Salt Lake County staff via the Submittable messaging system.
- **Adding Collaborators:** To learn more about inviting a collaborator to your application/submission, watch the video and/or read the help article here: [Inviting Collaborators on Submissions and Additional Forms | Submittable Help Center](#)
- **Transferring Application (Submission) Ownership:** Users can transfer application (submission) ownership on their own without contacting Salt Lake County staff or Submittable. To learn more about the process, read the help article here: [Transfer Submission Ownership for Submitters | Submittable Help Center](#)

6. SUBMITTABLE COMMUNICATIONS

All communications related to your application will be sent within Submittable via messaging. You will receive a copy of the communications to your email; however, you will need to reply within the platform. To keep communications related to your grant application organized, consistently use the platform's messaging system (rather than direct email) to communicate with Salt Lake County staff regarding your application status. Make sure to "Whitelist" or add as a safe sender the following address: notifications@email.submittable.com.

7. BEST PRACTICES/TIPS

- While Submittable can save as you go, it is recommended that you work on your responses in an outside document and then copy/paste your answers into Submittable.
- We recommend using a generic email address (such as grants@yourorganization.org)
- Rich-text editing is available within Submittable. You can bold, italicize, underline, and use bullets/numbered lists.
- Do not put linked information in the narrative responses.
- It is recommended to use one of the following browsers: Chrome, Safari, or Firefox.

8. SUBMITTABLE HELP CENTER

It is recommended that applicants first review the [Help for Applicants | Submittable Help Center](#) for all technical support questions related to Submittable navigation. If you are unable to find the answer or are still having issues, contact Salt Lake County staff.