

# Open Space – River Corridors Grant Program

## Implementation Guidelines for Project Criteria, Eligibility, Selection Process and Administration of Grants

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August 23, 2020

### **Background**

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In 2019, as part of the King County parks, recreation, trails and open space levy, voters approved up to \$22 million in Parks Levy proceeds to create the Open Space – River Corridors Grant Program to provide moneys for flood risk reduction, habitat restoration, open space, and recreation in river corridors. The purpose of this program is to incentivize projects that integrate multiple attributes of projects inside river corridors such as flood control, habitat, passive recreation, and trails. The moneys from this program will be used to protect and enhance those critical lands adjacent to rivers.

By providing levy proceeds to local and tribal governments, non-profits, as well as management districts, King County seeks to deliver projects that help to restore the natural functions of rivers and the benefits they provide to our natural environment and communities.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

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#### Eligible Project Types

Projects must protect or enhance riparian lands for public purposes or provide or improve public access to the waterbody. Eligible activities include:

1. Land Acquisition
2. Preconstruction
3. Feasibility and Design
4. Construction
5. Project-specific outreach and education.

All projects must be geographically located within King County.

#### Eligible Entities

The following entities are eligible to be recipients of the Open Space - River Corridors Grant :

1. King County, towns, and cities
2. Tribal organizations serving residents of King County
3. Port districts
4. Flood control districts
5. Diking and drainage districts
6. Conservation districts

- 35 7. Non-profit organizations
- 36 8. Salmon recovery forums

37 **Advisory Committee**

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38 Nomination Process

- 39 1. The King County Executive will seek input from King County Councilmembers on advisory
- 40 committee recommendations and provide notification to the King County Council 30 days
- 41 prior to appointment.
- 42 2. The King County Executive will appoint committee members who reflect the diverse needs
- 43 and populations within King County.

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45 Committee Makeup

46 The committee will be staffed by the King County Parks and Recreation Division and composed

47 of up to 19 people appointed by the King County Executive based on the composition below.

- 48 1. City representatives – up to nine members of the committee shall be elected or employed
- 49 officials of cities in King County. Cities in each of the nine County Council districts should
- 50 be represented.
- 51 2. Tribal organizations – up to two members shall represent tribal organizations within King
- 52 County.
- 53 3. Non-profit organizations – up to three members shall represent environmental non-profits
- 54 with a strong knowledge and experience with floodplains by design.
- 55 4. Up to five members shall be selected from the following groups: community organizations,
- 56 districts (park, flood, conservation, diking), and salmon recovery forums.

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58 Upon formation, the Advisory Committee will work closely with King County Parks and

59 Recreation Division staff to further develop and refine the application, review, and

60 recommendation process to ensure a streamlined process is in place for ease of use by applicants,

61 the Advisory Committee, and program administrators.

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63 **Project Selection and Reporting Process**

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- 64 1. King County Parks and Recreation Division staff will prepare and advertise a request for
- 65 proposal and receive applications on a biennial basis.
- 66 2. The Advisory Committee will review and rank proposals and will recommend projects and
- 67 award amounts. In accordance with Motion 15378, all awards in unincorporated areas should
- 68 be made in consultation with the Department of Local Services.
- 69 3. The Advisory Committee will recommend a project for funding to the Department of Natural
- 70 Resources and Parks only if the proposal meets the eligibility criteria listed above. Additional
- 71 criteria to weigh the relative strength of applications include:
  - 72 a. How the application meets the goals of a multi-benefit project outlined by the King
  - 73 County Council, including:
    - 74 i. Provides passive recreational benefit to the public
    - 75 ii. Improves or restores critical riparian habitat

- 76                   iii. Integrates recreation, access, and/or habitat benefits with flood protection  
77           b. The project will further established Countywide priorities, such as equity and social  
78           justice, the Strategic Climate Action Plan, improving water quality and increasing  
79           habitat, for example through green stormwater infrastructure, the Land Conservation  
80           Initiative, or implementation of the recommendations in the State of Play Report;
- 81           c. The project is supported through partnership and will be measured by resulting  
82           community benefits, as well as the strength and diversity of partnership;  
83           d. The project has been identified in an adopted plan;  
84           e. The project is located in an underserved area or provides recreational access or  
85           benefit where none currently exists;  
86           f. The project demonstrates certainty in success of delivery;  
87           g. The project demonstrates how successful implementation will be measured over time;  
88           h. The project identifies cost effectiveness and ability to leverage other funding or in-  
89           kind donations.
- 90   4. The King County Executive will transmit to the King County Council a recommended list of  
91   grant awardees, including a summary description of how each project meets the selection  
92   criteria and objectives of the Open Space – River Corridors Grant Program. The Executive  
93   will also transmit an ordinance to approve grant allocations for each project.
- 94   5. The King County Parks and Recreation Division will administer the contracts for approved  
95   projects. Any town or city receiving a grant will be required to notify the King County  
96   Council of any major milestones such as groundbreaking or ribbon cutting 30 days prior to  
97   the event.
- 98   6. The King County Parks and Recreation Division will provide an annual report on the status  
99   of the Open Space – River Corridors Grant Program. Information on the number of  
100   proposals received, projects receiving moneys in that year and a summary of completion of  
101   past projects shall be included in the report.

102   **Program Staffing**

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103   The King County Parks and Recreation Division shall be responsible for administering and  
104   staffing the program, utilizing a percentage of program moneys to pay for this administration.  
105   The percentage of moneys for program administration shall be consistent with other grant  
106   programs managed by County agencies.

107   Administration shall include development of the process, application materials, announcements,  
108   review process, contract development and administration, project tracking, financial accounting,  
109   project reporting, and audit function.