

County Planning Connection July 2022 News

July is Parks and Recreation Month!

The National Recreation And Park Association (NRPA) has a ton of ways you can celebrate Parks and Recreation Month this July as “We Rise Up for Parks and Recreation.” ***Did you know that four in five U.S. adults say that access to a nearby park, playground, open space or recreation center is an important factor in deciding where they want to live? Additionally, nearly three in five adults say that access to these amenities is very or extremely essential to their mental and physical health.*** To celebrate the essential services that parks and recreation provide, be sure to download the many celebration materials on their website, including:



- 2022 Park and Recreation Month Toolkit - the toolkit contains promotion materials such as logo, poster, fact sheets, sample social media posts, etc.
- Parks and Recreation Month Proclamation - a proclamation template for your local leadership to officially acknowledge the importance of parks and recreation and the benefits it provides to the people you serve.
- Park and Recreation Professionals Day on Friday, July 15 - ideas for hosting an event to celebrate parks and recreation professional staff.

Happy Parks and Recreation Month! <https://www.nrpa.org/events/july/>

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Spark Grants

<https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/rec/sparkgrants#about>

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act, the State of Michigan has allocated \$65 million of its funds to local parks and recreation. With this investment, a new, temporary DNR grant program called **Spark**, will support projects that provide safe, accessible, public recreation facilities and spaces to improve people’s health, introduce new recreation experiences, build on existing park infrastructure and make it easier for people to enjoy the outdoors. Program details including application timeline and reporting requirements are being defined by DNR right now, but the information we do know is available below.

- Applications will launch later this year; once announced, applicants will have up to eight weeks to apply. All projects must be completed by Dec. 31, 2026 on public land with the primary purpose of providing outdoor recreation.
- Grants will range from a minimum of \$100,000 to a maximum of \$1 million
- Grants will be distributed in three rounds: Round one: \$15 million by the end of 2022; Round two: \$25 million in the spring of 2023; and Round three: \$25 million in the summer of 2023.
- Eligible applicants must be local units of government or public authorities that provide public recreation, or regional or statewide organizations of such entities working together.
- Projects must support and enhance neighborhood features that promote improved health and safety outcomes or address the increased repair or maintenance needs to respond to significantly greater use of public facilities in local communities across the state that have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Projects may include the development, renovation or redevelopment of public recreation facilities, and the provision of recreation-focused equipment and programs at public recreation spaces.