

Gallatin County Open Space Levy Funding Application “Other Eligible Projects” Category

The Gallatin County Commission shall issue a call for applications, typically once a year, opening up the application cycle for interested parties to apply for funding from the Gallatin County Open Space Levy funds under the “Other Eligible Project” category. Any party seeking funding from this program must submit an application and supporting documentation as outlined herein.

I. Eligibility.

To be eligible for funding, projects must be located in Gallatin County and meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Projects are limited to land acquisition, capital improvements, and maintenance projects that support the purpose of the Gallatin County Open Space levy. Applicants must demonstrate how a proposed project is related to the provision of recreation, protection of water quality of streams and rivers, management of growth, or protection of wildlife areas. Conservation easements are not eligible for funding under this category.
2. Projects must provide a tangible and compelling public benefit or provide public access, preferably both. If not located on public land or land dedicated to public use, public access must be in the form of a long-term easement or land use license granting public access.
3. Projects must score a minimum average score of 60 points to be eligible for funding. Note that the County is not obligated to award funding to a project just because it scores greater than 60 points.
4. Applicants are limited to public agencies, non-profit organizations, and property owners’ associations.
5. Projects must be in compliance with the applicable jurisdiction’s planning documents (e.g. growth policy, neighborhood plan, zoning regulation, transportation plan, trails plan, etc.)

II. Award of Funding.

1. The Gallatin County Open Lands Board shall review and score projects in an advisory role for the County Commission. The final decision on awarding Open Space Levy funds shall be made by the County Commission in a public meeting.
2. It is anticipated that interest in this funding source will exceed the amount of funding available. The maximum award for a project in a single application cycle is limited to \$100,000. Applicants may request funding in multiple application cycles to fund a project as outlined in the application materials.
3. Upon award of funding, the Applicant shall enter into a grant award agreement with Gallatin County specifying relevant details of the project and how funds will be paid. Please note that

the Applicant will typically be required to submit an invoice to the County to be reimbursed for eligible project expenses.

4. Gallatin County reserves the right to issue an award less than the amount of funding requested. If the Applicant cannot complete a project with the amount of funding awarded, or the Applicant fails to enter into a grant award agreement acceptable to Gallatin County in a timely manner, Gallatin County reserves the right to reallocate the funding to another project.
5. Gallatin County reserves the right to not award all available funding in an application cycle.

III. Application Process

1. To be considered for funding, applications must be submitted by the deadline specified in the call for applications and must include required supporting documentation.
2. Applications will be screened by the Open Lands Coordinator to ensure that minimum eligibility requirements are met and that applications are reasonably complete. Complete applications for eligible projects will be forwarded to the Open Lands Board for their review. Incomplete applications or applications that aren't eligible for funding may be rejected by the Open Lands Coordinator.
3. The Open Lands Board will hold an informational meeting to familiarize its members with the applications and projects. Applicants will be given an opportunity at this meeting to make a brief presentation on the details of their project to the Open Lands Board.
4. Following the informational meeting and prior to scoring projects, Open Lands Board members and staff may visit project sites. To avoid *ex parte* concerns, OLB member communication with applicants for the purpose of site visits shall be limited to that necessary to obtain access to the project site.
5. Open Lands Board members will submit their project scores to the Open Lands Coordinator who shall tabulate scores. Scores will be reported as the average score, calculated according to the total number of Open Lands Board members who submit scores.
6. The Open Lands Board will hold one or more meetings to review project scores and make recommendations to the County Commission on the award of funding.
7. The County Commission shall consider the Open Lands Board's recommendations in a public meeting and make decisions on funding projects.
8. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant awards agreement with the County before they can be reimbursed for eligible project expenses.

IV. Evaluation Criteria

Applications are reviewed and scored relative to other applications in the same funding cycle. This means that there may be varying levels of support for similar projects during different application cycles. Out of 100 possible points on the project scoring matrix, projects must receive a minimum final project score of 60 points to be eligible for funding. Final project score shall be the mean score of all scores submitted by Open Lands Board members participating in the scoring of the project.

Applications will be reviewed against the following criteria:

1. *The extent to which the proposed project supports the overall purpose and intent of the Gallatin County Open Space Levy.*

Explanation: The purpose and intent of the Gallatin County Open Space Levy is to support the provision of recreation, water quality of streams and rivers, management of growth, or protection of wildlife areas. Projects that do a better job explaining how they support the overall purpose and intent of the Gallatin County Open Space Levy will be scored higher by Open Lands Board members than projects that don't support the purpose and intent as well.

2. *The degree to which the proposed project results in a tangible and compelling public benefit, either to publicly accessible land or to a public resource (e.g. water quality, wildlife, etc.).*

Explanation: Projects funded by the Open Space Levy are expected to provide a meaningful public benefit, either to publicly accessible land, or to a public resource. Projects that are perceived as resulting in the greatest public good will be viewed more favorably. Applications will be scored based on how well they can describe and communicate the projects public benefit relative to other applications in the same application cycle.

3. *Degree to which the investment of public dollars in the proposed project will provide a lasting impact.*

Explanation: Open Space Levy funding is a limited resource, and Gallatin County wishes to see these dollars used in a manner that will provide a lasting benefit for County residents. Applicants are expected to describe the anticipated lifespan of a project and the lasting legacy that will be created through investment of public funding. As such, projects related to real estate acquisition or improvements thereon will generally score higher than requests to fund equipment. Use of equipment funded through this program must be narrowly restricted to purposes that support the program.

4. *Degree to which the proposed project supports community objectives as established in documents adopted by the community (i.e. the extent to which the proposed project complies with the community's adopted growth policy, neighborhood plan, zoning regulation, transportation plan, trails plan, etc.).*

Explanation: Communities establish goals, policies, and regulatory requirements through adoption of a variety of documents (e.g. growth policies, neighborhood plans, zoning

regulations, transportation plans, parks and trails plans, capital improvement plans, etc.) Projects that can articulate how they support and comply with these community objectives will be scored higher by Open Lands Board members than projects that cannot.

5. Degree to which the investment of Open Space Levy funding is leveraged with funding from other sources.

Explanation: Leveraging funds from this program with other sources of both public and private funds is important. Projects are scored based on the percentage of funding for the total cost of the project that comes from other funding sources.

Scoring Matrix		Points Possible	Points Awarded
1	Degree to which the proposed project supports the overall purpose and intent of the Gallatin County Open Space Levy.		
2	Degree to which the proposed project results in a tangible and compelling public benefit, either to publically accessible land or to a public resource (e.g. water quality, wildlife, etc.).		
3	Degree to which the investment of public dollars in the proposed project will provide a lasting impact.		
4	Degree to which the proposed project supports established community objectives as statements in documents adopted by the community (i.e. the extent to which the proposed project complies with the community's adopted growth policy, neighborhood plan, zoning regulation, transportation plan, trails plan, etc.).		
5	<p>Degree to which the investment of Open Space Levy funding is leveraged with funding from other sources.</p> <p>Points awarded based on the percentage of the total project cost coming from other funding sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If 25% or less of the project cost funded by other sources, score = 0.25 x points possible • If between 25.01% and 50.00% of the project cost funded by other sources, score = 0.5 x points possible • If between 50.01% and 75.00% of the project cost funded by other sources, score = 0.75 x points possible • If greater than 75.01% of the project cost funded by other sources, score = 1.0 x points possible 		
<p>Instructions for Open Lands Board Members: Before scoring applications each Open Lands Board member will assign 10 – 30 points to each of the five criteria, such that there is a total possible score of 100 points. The Board member may not adjust the points possible between categories during an application cycle.</p>			

Application for Gallatin County Open Space Levy Funding
“Other Eligible Projects” Category

1. Project Name: _____

2. Please provide a brief description of your project:

3. **Budget Information:**

Amount of Funding Requested: _____

Total Project Cost: _____

Amount of funding sought/secured from other sources: _____

Funding from other sources as percentage of total project cost: _____

Do you anticipate requesting future funds to complete project: _____

4. **Applicant Contact Information:**

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address:

5. Property Owner Contact Information:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address:

If multiple property owners attach contact information on separate sheet.

On Separate Sheet(s) Provide the Following:

6. Narrative addressing evaluation criteria (see pages 3 and 4 of application packet for additional information).
7. Describe proposed timeline for project and any work already completed on the project.
8. Describe anticipated maintenance requirements for the project along with an explanation of who will be responsible for maintenance and maintenance costs.
9. Please attach any supporting documents, maps, pictures, letters of support, etc. that may be useful in the initial evaluation of your proposal.
10. Provide 15 copies of your completed application and supporting documentation and one digital copy.

I hereby certify that the information on and attached to this application is true and correct, and by signing below I authorize County Staff and Open Lands Board Members to access the project site as necessary to evaluate this application.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Property Owner's Signature (If different than Applicant)

Date