

Solicitation for Requests for Funding

Environmental Sustainability Matching Grant Program - 2024 Funding

The Boulder County Commissioners are seeking Requests for Funding from municipalities located in Boulder County for the 2024 allocation of grant funding for sustainability-focused initiatives that will address the priority needs of local communities, as required by the Sustainability Tax, which was approved by the voters in 2016 as County Ballot Issue 1C “Countywide Sustainability Sales and Use Tax Extension” (“Sustainability Tax”).

- Any municipality within Boulder County is eligible to apply for this grant funding.
- The application process will open on Nov. 8, 2023. Applications must be submitted online no later than Dec. 5, 2023 at 5 p.m.
- Request for funding must meet the requirements and selection criteria outlined in this document.
- If your application proposes an environmental sustainability project that will include leveraging existing sustainability services (i.e., PACE, EnergySmart, CC4CA, WIC, Resource Central, etc.), please contact the Grant Program Manager by Nov. 15.
- Applications must be submitted online. The [online form](#) must be completed in one sitting. Answers cannot be saved for update later.
- Steps to Apply:
 1. Download and complete the application summary form provided on the program website. If you are proposing more than one project, please succinctly describe your overall goals, desired outcomes, and benefits as well as brief project descriptions. There are no longer detailed project forms as in past years.
 2. Use the completed form in #1 to fill out the online application form, attach the signed letter or resolution documenting agreement by the municipal staff and the municipality’s relevant advisory board to pursue the proposed project as described in the Evaluation Criteria section later in the RFF, and submit.
- Applications must be completed in their entirety.
- If you have questions about the grant program, or application process, please contact Lea Yancey at lyancey@bouldercounty.gov.

Request for Funding, the following terms will be used:

Sustainability Tax: The Sustainability Tax was approved by the voters in 2016 as County Ballot Issue 1C “Countywide Sustainability Sales and Use Tax Extension” and is the source of funding for this grant program.

Grant Program: The Boulder County Environmental Sustainability Matching Grant Program is the grant program that makes available grant funding each year to municipalities in Boulder County for environmental sustainability projects.

Municipality: Refers to an incorporated city or town, and for the purposes of this Request for Funding refers only to municipalities located within Boulder County.

Request for Funding: This notice that announces to municipalities that applications are being accepted for funding for the Grant Program.

About the Environmental Sustainability Matching Grant Program Funding

In November 2016, voters approved the Sustainability Tax ballot initiative, to allocate a portion of sales and use tax revenue to fund sustainability infrastructure and programs, including grant funding to cities and towns for sustainability-focused initiatives that will address the priority needs of local communities.

The Grant Program provides an opportunity for municipalities in the county to undertake environmental sustainability priorities within their communities. In addition, the Grant Program will enhance collaborative efforts and leverage resources across our county for a more regional approach to environmental sustainability. For information on Boulder County’s commitment to environmental sustainability, please review the county’s [Environmental Sustainability Plan](#).

Each year, the Board of County Commissioners invites applications from municipalities for projects that meet the Sustainability Tax and Grant Program objectives. Environmental sustainability projects are eligible for funding. The Grant Program is focused on environmental sustainability, yet social and economic co-benefits are encouraged. Municipalities are strongly encouraged to incorporate climate justice and social equity into their proposed projects.

The applications for funding are submitted through this Request for Funding process. This funding cycle and allocation will address funding for calendar year 2024. Only one application is accepted per municipality. Each municipality can apply for funding by submitting an application with a description of the project and associated budget. Municipalities are required to provide a match. Projects are expected to be completed within 12 months. The county plans to award funding to the selected municipalities in the first quarter of 2024 after it issues an Award Notice to the municipality for incorporation into the existing IGA with the county.

Application Deadline

The application is on a separate online form and is due electronically by **Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.**

Eligibility Requirements

- Any incorporated city or town located within Boulder County is eligible to apply for funding on the basis of program need and proportionate to community population.
- The municipality must provide a 25% match of the dollar amount requested.

Compliance Requirements

- The purpose of the Grant Program is to fund projects that, in the opinion of the Commissioners, are in the best interest of Boulder County and consistent with the Sustainability Tax.
- The municipality must meet insurance requirements.
- Projects must comply with all federal, state and local land use, regulatory, and permit requirements.
- The municipality must be willing to enter into an IGA with the county.
- The Board of County Commissioners reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to wholly fund, partially fund, or reject any and all requests for funding.
- Funds are awarded on a competitive basis; no requests will be considered outside the standardized application and review process. There is no appeals process for proposals that are not accepted for funding.
- Boulder County shall have sole discretion to approve or disapprove any delayed expenditure of grant funds. If disapproved, the allocation may be recovered by the county and/or re-allocated for the current or subsequent years, at the county's sole discretion.

Eligible Projects

Proposed projects must be consistent with the purposes of the Sustainability Tax to fund projects that promote environmental sustainability. Proposed projects must demonstrate a program need and benefit to the community.

The following guidelines are meant to assist applicants in understanding certain parameters of the Grant Program:

- Projects that provide a benefit to the community.
- Ongoing sustainability services for community members (such as ongoing waste services for residents). While ongoing services are permitted, the county encourages municipalities to be innovative and fund a variety of environmental sustainability projects over the years of this Grant Program.
- Ongoing municipal sustainability staff, with the following restrictions:

- After three years of county grant funding to support a municipality's sustainability position, the municipality must convert the position to be funded by the municipality. The municipality may use grant funding in years 4 and 5 to ramp down county grant funds and ramp up municipality funding. By the end of year 5, the position can no longer be supported by county grant funding.
- Municipalities with a population within town limits of less than 1,000 are not permitted to use grant funding for a paid sustainability coordinator. Small towns are instead encouraged to utilize expert consultants, internships, or fellowships. Proposals by two or more of the small mountain communities of Jamestown, Lyons, Nederland and Ward to hire a shared sustainability coordinator may be considered.
- Applications may include municipal capital improvement projects (i.e., environmental improvements within/on municipal buildings, fleet, and municipal infrastructure), consistent with the following guidance:
 - Funding is only eligible for sustainability improvements above what is required by code.
 - Capital improvements proposed by each municipality are capped at 50 percent of each municipality's available annual allocation.
- The county welcomes applications that leverage or build upon existing successful sustainability services, including Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE), EnergySmart, Restore Colorado, and Resource Central's water-saving programs as well as climate policy coalitions such as Colorado Communities for Climate Action ([CC4CA](#)). Types of leveraging projects are denoted below with an "*".
- Applications may include transportation electrification studies and implementation, as well as supplementing existing state grants or utility funding for electric vehicle charging stations. In general, Boulder County funds can not be used for purposes in which other state agencies or utility programs already fund transportation electrification efforts, consistent with the following guidance:
 - Boulder County will not fund transportation electrification planning or studies already offered by Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy program, the [state Electric Vehicle Readiness Planning grants](#), or other similar programs.
 - Boulder County will not fund projects that are eligible for funding by the Colorado Energy Office (CEO) [Charge Ahead Colorado program](#) and [Fleet-ZERO grant program](#). For example, if your municipality wants to apply for funding to install EV charging stations at municipal locations, you'll need to apply to the state grant programs, not to the county sustainability grant program. However, if your municipality wants to partner with CEO to contribute additional funding to increase the interest and participation in your community of workplace, multifamily, or public EV charging, that project may be permissible under the county grant funding.
 - Boulder County will not fund electric vehicle charging infrastructure or projects that are eligible for funding by local utilities, including programs offered as a result of Xcel Energy's Transportation Electrification Plan.

The following are the categories and eligible types of projects. Municipalities are strongly encouraged to incorporate climate justice and social equity into their proposed projects. If your municipality has an environmental sustainability project that will include leveraging existing sustainability services, please contact the Grant Program Manager by November 15 to confirm your project is eligible.

- *GHG reduction strategies
 - *Carbon sequestration, such as tree planting or compost application
 - *Membership in climate policy or action organizations (municipalities are encouraged to join Colorado Communities for Climate Action-CC4CA)
 - Climate adaptation
- The development of commercial/industrial/institutional energy codes & policy
 - Support for commercial building electrification
 - *Leveraging county-wide Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE) services, including energy, waste, water & transportation advising as well as policy and regulation implementation
- Restoring or maintaining the health of ecosystems
 - Implementing a chipping program or other uses of forest thinning materials to encourage fire mitigation
 - Becoming a Firewise USA ® site or implementing a related action plan
 - The development or implementation of an innovative green infrastructure
- Landscape restoration and/or soil health improvements
 - Increasing pollinator habitat and habitat connectivity
 - The development or implementation of a nature-based climate solutions program (forest health, regenerative agriculture, urban tree canopies, etc.)
- The development of residential and/or commercial/industrial/institutional energy codes & policy
 - Renewable energy deployment to support low-income utility bill cost savings
 - Electrification or decarbonization of building systems, equipment and appliances
 - Low income services for energy efficiency, solar, electrification and indoor air quality
 - *Indoor air quality improvements & incentives
 - *Leveraging county-wide EnergySmart residential services
- Land Use (zoning, permitting, etc.) updates

- Policies & codes for new construction
- Linkages between housing and energy
- Linkages between housing and transportation
- Linkages between business districts and transportation
- **Local Food & Agriculture**
 - Local food infrastructure
 - *Leveraging county services of Double Up Food Bucks or Farmers Market Women, Infants, and Children Program
 - *Leveraging Restore Colorado
 - *Leveraging the Boulder County Sustainable Food & Agriculture fund
- **Sustainability Planning**
 - The development or update of a sustainability plan or climate action plan
 - Hiring a part-time Sustainability Coordinator or Planner to assist in implementation of a community sustainability plan (see section above for more detail)
- **Transportation**
 - Policies & codes for reducing vehicle miles travelled, GHG emissions, and/or traffic congestion
 - Policies & codes that support non-single occupancy vehicle travel and/or electric vehicle (EV) readiness
 - Alternative transportation, including walking, biking, bus, carpool, carshare, and other shared mobility
- *Leveraging county Mobility for All services
- Transportation planning, studies, and implementation
- *Supplementing existing state or utility grants or funding for electric vehicle charging stations
- **Water Quality & Water Conservation**
 - *Leveraging Resource Central's water-conserving programs
 - Providing incentives and/or funding for xeriscaping, turf replacement, and water efficient landscaping beyond current offerings
 - Funding for water saving devices
 - The development or implementation of a source water protection plan
 - Water quality protection measures beyond what is required by an existing permit
- **Zero Waste**
 - Zero waste goal setting & roadmaps
 - Creative reduction and/or reuse of materials
 - Incentivizing new businesses to create products or processes that keep waste out of the landfill
 - Recycling & composting in HOAs and Businesses
 - Planning and implementation of other Zero Waste initiatives that achieve Zero Waste goal

Examples of Projects Completed in Past Years

The following are examples of eligible projects completed in prior years:

- Sustainability plan development & adoption
- Hiring a sustainability coordinator, fellow, intern, or contracting with consultant
- Membership in Colorado Communities for Climate Action (CC4CA)
- Climate vulnerability and risk mapping
- Contractor training in support of residential energy ordinance
- Home energy efficiency incentives (in collaboration with EnergySmart)
- Electrification of landscaping equipment
- Vegetable garden and local food projects
- Bike racks
- Incentives to encourage public transit ridership in partnership with transportation management organizations
- Incentives for residents or businesses (in collaboration with PACE) to conserve water
- Zero waste composition study
- Recycling and hard-to-recycle material diversion
- Reusable takeout food containers
- Yard waste collection or drop-off facility

Evaluation Criteria

Awards will be based on consideration of the following performance measurements:

- How the proposed project fulfills a municipality's sustainability priorities *or* the countywide Environmental Sustainability Plan, and how success will be measured;
- The ability of the government to provide assurances that it will be able to complete the proposed project within a 12-month timeframe;
- Commitment to meet the funding match requirements;
- The inclusion of documentation (letter, resolution, etc.) demonstrating agreement by the municipality staff and the municipality's environmental sustainability advisory board to pursue the proposed project so long as the funding request is granted.

Funding

Funding requests must be for a minimum amount of \$5,000. The maximum amount any municipality may apply for is proportionate to the population of the municipality; however, small municipalities whose proportionate maximum is below \$15,000 may apply for up to \$15,000. The table below shows the maximum estimated funding each municipality is eligible to apply for from 2024 annual funding; due to fluctuations in sales and use tax collections, the table represents estimates only. Grant Program funding for 2024 is subject to the county's 2023 budget approval process, and final award amounts may vary from the estimates in the table.

| Sustainability Tax: Municipal Grants - Allocation to Communities in 2024 | | | | |
|--|----------------|-------------|--|-------------------|
| Allocated Share of Tax by Municipality Proportionate to Population [†] Minimum Allocation = \$15,000 | | | | |
| City/Town | Population | % Pop | 6% of Entire Revenue Generated Allocated to Communities with \$15,000 minimum threshold | 25% Match*** |
| Boulder | 105,650 | 32% | \$ 215,990 | \$ 53,997 |
| Erie in BC* | 14,809 | 5% | \$ 30,275 | \$ 7,569 |
| Jamestown | 250 | 0.08% | \$ 15,000 | \$ 3,750 |
| Lafayette | 30,890 | 9% | \$ 63,151 | \$ 15,788 |
| Longmont | 98,498 | 30% | \$ 201,368 | \$ 50,342 |
| Louisville | 19,394 | 6% | \$ 39,649 | \$ 9,912 |
| Lyons | 2,145 | 1% | \$ 15,000 | \$ 3,750 |
| Nederland | 1,478 | 0.5% | \$ 15,000 | \$ 3,750 |
| Superior | 12,240 | 4% | \$ 25,023 | \$ 6,256 |
| Ward | 128 | 0.04% | \$ 15,000 | \$ 3,750 |
| Unincorporated BC** | 41,942 | 13% | \$ 84,309 | \$ - |
| Total | 327,424 | 100% | \$ 719,765 | \$ 158,864 |

† Population values based on Colorado DOLA State Demography Office data for 2022 as most recent available. Each municipality eligible for funds above the minimum threshold is reduced 7% to cover the minimum grant amount.
**Population of Erie located in Boulder County is 13,124 **Boulder County will administer these funds.*
****Match is 25% cash match requirement, except in-kind allowed for small communities with population <5,000.*

The estimates for population are based on population totals for Colorado municipalities published online by the State of Colorado Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office.

Grant funding is awarded annually and as such, it is important that awardees implement projects within a 12-month period. If a project requires planning and community buy-in, it is recommended that a municipality conduct this preparatory work before applying for project implementation funding support.

Funding is contingent on the receipt of sales and use tax revenues through the Sustainability Tax. There is no guarantee that Sustainability Grant awards will be made in any given year. Funding for future years cannot be guaranteed.

Match

Municipalities with a population greater than or equal to 5,000 must match their request with a 25 percent cash match of the dollar amount requested.

However, in the event such a municipality has a demonstrated inability to meet the cash match due to unforeseen circumstances, the county, in its sole discretion, may determine to modify the cash match requirement. You must make this request in your application with proposed allocation amounts (i.e. reduced cash match and/or in-kind, volunteer, and donation contributions). Boulder County will review exception requests on a case-by-case basis.

Municipalities with a population less than 5,000 must match their request with a 25 percent match from in-kind, volunteer, and donation contributions (“Other Community Contribution”) and/or through a cash match. In-kind contributions can include paid staff, consultant, and intern time.

Volunteer rates must be calculated consistent with the annual Independent Sector for Colorado state volunteer rate, which is \$34.36 per hour for the most recent data. Each municipality must document how they track Other Community Contributions through progress reporting.

Larger Projects that Exceed Annual Funding Allocation

A municipality can submit a proposal to have the county hold funds in reserve for a project with an estimated project budget that exceeds the municipality’s 2024 funding allocation. For such proposals, the municipality must contact the Grant Program Manager by November 15 to receive information on how to complete your application.

Reporting Requirements

Municipalities awarded a grant will be required to submit annual financial reporting for their grant funded sustainability projects. A municipal representative shall attend meetings with all grant awardees and one-on-one check-ins with the Grant Program Manager, as requested.

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Contact Information for Grant Program:

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