



COMMUNITY PARKS INITIATIVE

PRESENTERS



Keira Amstutz, Project Director

Community Parks Initiative



Phyllis Boyd, Assistant Project Director

Community Parks Initiative





AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Overview of Indiana Community Development Projects and CPI
3. Initiative Phases & Guidance
4. Questions & Answers
5. Timeline
6. Submittable Platform Overview
7. Resources

MEETING GUIDELINES & PROTOCOLS

- + Use the chat to ask questions.
- + Request for Proposals (RFP) should serve as your primary reference throughout the grant proposal process.
- + Information Session slides will be posted to the CPI website.

Information Sessions are scheduled for:

- + Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2026, 4 p.m., EDT
- + Thursday, Sept. 17, 2026, 9 a.m., EDT
- + Monday, Sept. 21, 2026, 12 p.m., EDT



About Indiana Community Development Projects, Inc.



COMMUNITY PARKS INITIATIVE

ABOUT ICDP

- + ICDP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established to support projects to improve the quality of life and place for individuals and communities throughout the State of Indiana.
- + The CPI is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. through ICDP.

AIM OF THE COMMUNITY PARKS INITIATIVE

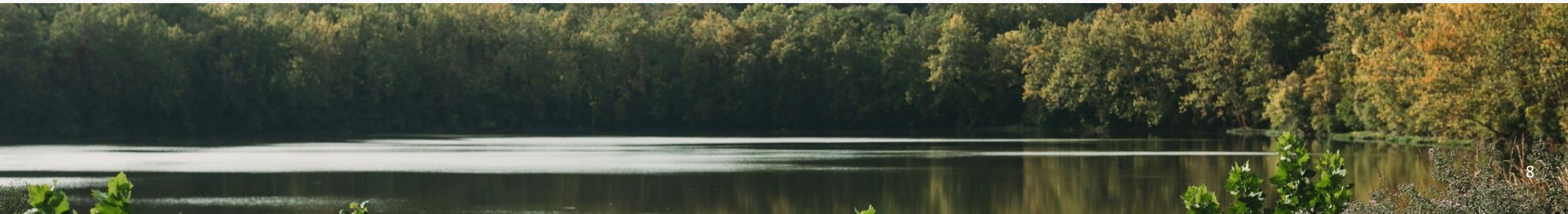
The aim of the Community Parks Initiative is to help invited cities and towns in Indiana **enhance local park systems across Indiana** through the development and implementation of **community-driven plans** to improve **quality of life, place, and connection.**

Refer to p. 1 of the RFP.

COMMUNITY PARKS AND PARK SYSTEMS ARE VITAL ASSETS

- + Provide a place where people can come together.
- + Are a free or low-cost place to recreate and celebrate special occasions.
- + Provide an opportunity for people of all ages to enjoy nature and its beauty.

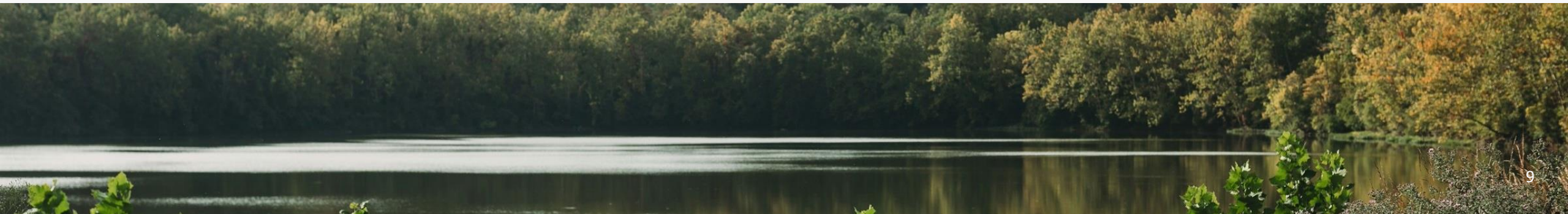
Refer to pp. 2-3 of the RFP for more detail.



COMMUNITY PARKS AND PARK SYSTEMS ARE VITAL ASSETS

- + Provide opportunities to experience the arts and learn about and celebrate local history and culture.
- + Offer free Wi-Fi, warming and cooling stations, meal delivery and other essential services.
- + Spark additional investment and connect to broader community revitalization efforts.

Refer to pp. 2-3 of the RFP for more detail.



Initiative Phases & Guidance

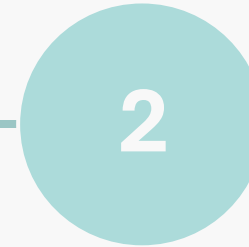
GRANT PHASES

PHASE 1
Noncompetitive Planning Grants
Up to \$14 million in grant funding



Proposal submission deadline:
12 p.m., EDT, Friday, October 30, 2026

PHASE 2
Competitive Implementation Grants
Up to \$380 million in grant funding



Proposal submission deadline:
12 p.m., EDT, Friday, August 6, 2027

GUIDING QUESTIONS AND PRIORITIES

- + How can your park system strengthen its ability to meet the social, health, and wellness needs of local residents, now and in the future?
- + How can parks play a larger role in bringing people together to foster civic engagement and community spirit?
- + How can parks better reflect what makes your community unique? Are there opportunities to explore local history and highlight the area’s attributes through creative design elements, compelling public art, and engaging public programming?
- + How can parks enhance the appeal of a community, both for residents and non-residents alike?

Refer to p. 3 of the RFP.

GUIDING QUESTIONS AND PRIORITIES

- + How can parks complement other community and economic development investments being made in your community and region (e.g., trail networks, community revitalization efforts, arts and cultural plans)?
- + How can your park system increase accessibility to and utilization of its local parks and related greenspaces, particularly for individuals and communities that may be underserved?
- + Are there collaborative or innovative ways to increase community programming in your park system (e.g., farmers’ markets, heritage festivals, arts and cultural events, and youth activities)?

Refer to p. 3 of the RFP.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to 126 invited cities and towns across Indiana that:

- 1. Have a population of at least 5,000 residents according to 2025 population estimates from STATS Indiana.**
 - + The list of these cities and towns and the funding amounts for which they are invited to apply is available at www.indianacpi.org.

Refer to p. 1 of the RFP for more detail.



ELIGIBILITY

2. Have a parks and recreation function with sufficient resources and/or expertise to successfully plan, design, execute and maintain park improvements.

Refer to p. 1 of the RFP for more detail.



ELIGIBILITY –

Documentation of Parks and Recreation Function

For the Community Parks Initiative to have an enduring impact, participating cities and towns must have a parks and recreation function equipped to **implement, sustain and maintain park system improvements and/or programming.**

A city or town must submit documentation to demonstrate it has **sufficient resources and/or expertise to successfully plan, design, execute and maintain park improvements and related programming.**

Refer to p. 5 of the RFP and www.indianacpi.org for more detail.



ELIGIBILITY –

Documentation of Parks and Recreation Function

1. A brief description of how the city or town authority currently manages and maintains its parks and implements any park improvements.

Refer to p. 5 of the RFP and www.indianacpi.org for more detail.

ELIGIBILITY –

Documentation of Parks and Recreation Function

- 1. If there is a department tasked with these responsibilities, provide information about its annual budget, staffing and how it is accountable to the city or town authority.
- 2. If these responsibilities are performed by an outside contractor, provide the budgeted amount for the outsourced contract, the name of contractor, how long the arrangement has been in place and whether it is expected to continue, and who is responsible for managing the contractor.

Refer to p. 5 of the RFP and www.indianacpi.org for more detail.

ELIGIBILITY –

Documentation of Parks and Recreation Function

2. Supporting documentation to substantiate the relationship between the city or town and its parks and recreation function:
 - + Budget or description of funding sources, and
 - + One or more documents that substantiate the relationship.

Refer to p. 5 of the RFP and www.indianacpi.org for more detail.



ELIGIBILITY –

Documentation of Parks and Recreation Function

At least one of these supporting documents must be included to substantiate the relationship between the city or town and its parks and recreation function:

- a. Organizational chart
- b. Responsibilities for key staff
- c. Charter of Department or similar document
- d. Other (e.g., agreement with contractor or nonprofit partner)

Email info@indianacpi.org with questions about eligibility.

Refer to p. 5 of the RFP and www.indianacpi.org for more detail.



NONPROFIT PARTNERS

- + You may choose to designate, in writing, a local 501(c)(3) public charity with a demonstrated commitment to parks to serve as the grant recipient.
- + Such public charities would be required to have, and provide evidence of, a sufficiently documented relationship with the appropriate governmental entity to help ensure:
 - Accountability
 - Transparency
 - Pursuit of community-supported projects that benefit the public

Refer to pp. 1,5 & 8 of the RFP for more detail.



NONPROFIT PARTNERS

You may choose to designate a 501(c)(3) public charity to serve as grantee for several reasons, including, but not limited to:

- + The public charity has an existing arrangement with the city or town to manage or support local parks system improvements.
- + The city or town's partnership with the public charity would add capacity and/or expertise to develop and implement projects or programs to enhance the local parks system.

Refer to pp. 1,5 & 8 of the RFP for more detail.



NONPROFIT PARTNERS

- + If this option is selected, the city or town must coordinate closely with the designated public charity in the execution of the grant to ensure projects align with the city or town's interests and priorities.

Email info@indianacpi.org for further guidance and discussion.

Refer to pp. 1,5 & 8 of the RFP for more detail.



Phase 1 Planning Grants

PHASE 1

PLANNING GRANTS

Invited cities and towns may submit a proposal requesting a Planning Grant ranging from **\$50,000 to \$250,000**, based on population.

ICDP has allocated enough funds to **award Planning Grants to all invited and eligible applicants** who submit a complete and satisfactory proposal that addresses the initiative's aims and objectives; however, ICDP reserves the right to decline any proposal.

Planning Grants:

- + Should be used to conduct comprehensive assessment and planning activities that:
 - Align with the aims of the initiative,
 - Address the initiative's guiding questions, and
 - Help communities envision and develop plans to enhance and revitalize local public parks and related greenspaces in some compelling way.

Refer to pp. 3-6 of the RFP for more detail.



Potential **Planning Grant** activities may include, but are not limited to:

- + **Community engagement activities:**
 - Written feedback through surveys, comment cards or polling.
 - Oral feedback through discussions, interviews, focus groups and meetings with a broad cross section of community stakeholders.
- + **Exploration and research:**
 - Studies of promising practices.
 - Site visits to other parks for inspiration.
 - Attendance at relevant conferences and other learning opportunities.

Potential **Planning Grant** activities may include, but are not limited to:

+ **Assessment and planning:**

- Assessments of existing park system amenities.
- Development of a master plan for the park system.
- Development of park-specific plans.

+ **Expert guidance:**

- Consultations with artists, designers, engineers, contractors, historians and/or other subject matter experts.
- Consultations with local governing authorities relating to zoning, building permits, development standards and drainage plans.
- Site and environmental analyses.
- Utilization of consultants and other third parties to help inform, illustrate, and execute the planning activities.

Phase 1 Planning Grant Proposal

PLANNING GRANT PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

+ One-page cover letter:

- **Must be signed** by the highest-ranking elected city or town official *and* the head of the parks and recreation department.
- Should include the amount of funding requested.
- Should attest that the materials submitted to document the Parks and Recreation Function are complete and accurate, and that activities have the support of leadership.

Refer to pp. 5-6 of the RFP for more detail.



PLANNING GRANT PROPOSAL COMPONENTS – NONPROFIT PARTNERS

If you are considering designating a public charity as the CPI Planning Grant recipient:

- + Your cover letter must describe how your city or town will work with the public charity to oversee the proposed planning activities, and
- + That public charity's executive staff leader and board chair must also sign the cover letter.

Refer to pp. 5-6 of the RFP for more detail.



PLANNING GRANT PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

- + **Contact information.**
- + **Documentation of Parks and Recreation Function:** Used to verify that the invited city's or town's parks and recreation function meets the eligibility requirement of the initiative.

Refer to pp. 5-6 of the RFP for more detail.



PLANNING GRANT PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

+ **Proposal narrative:** This is a narrative description of no more than 1,000 words or two (2) pages for those funding requests up to \$100,000 and no more than 2,500 words or five (5) pages for funding requests of more than \$100,000. This narrative should describe how the city or town intends to allocate its Planning Grant and should include:

- Overview of park system
- Planning activities
- Stakeholder engagement
- Organizational capacity

+ **Budget:** A detailed account of how your city or town intends to allocate its Planning Grant.

Refer to pp. 5-6 of the RFP for more detail.



PLANNING GRANT PROPOSAL

TIPS AND INFORMATION

- + **Submit a single proposal for your city or town:**
Only one proposal per eligible city or town will be accepted.
- + **Proposal submission deadline:** Planning Grant proposals and related materials are due no later than 12 p.m. noon, Eastern Daylight Time, Friday, October 30.

Refer to p. 6 of the RFP.



Phase 2 Implementation Grant Proposal

PHASE 2

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

- + Implementation Grant funding ranges from **\$1 million to \$30 million**, based on population.
- + Implementation Grants are **competitive**. Not all proposals will be funded.

Refer to p. 6 of the RFP for more detail.



IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

- + Implementation Grants support **local park system projects and programs with compelling community impact.**
- + Funds can be used to support a **single large project or invest in multiple projects** across a local park system.
- + Proposed projects and programs should be **informed by the planning process and reflect the needs of the community.**

Refer to p. 6 of the RFP for more detail.



Potential **Implementation Grant** activities may include, but are not limited to:

- + Renovations, upgrades, enhancements or construction of:
 - Playgrounds, sport fields and courts, or pools and splash pads.
 - Comfort stations, gazebos or pavilions, seating and signage.
 - Other parks amenities.

- + Development of new public access points connecting local parks to:
 - Adjacent trails.*
 - Waterways.
 - Natural areas.

**Projects that extend existing or create new trail routes outside of public parks or greenspaces are not eligible.*

Potential **Implementation Grant** activities may include, but are not limited to:

- + Construction of a family or community center in a local park for neighborhood programs.
- + Development of programming to draw more regular park visits, including:
 - Community concert series.
 - Farmers' markets.
 - Bird watching clubs.
 - Other educational subjects of community interest.
- + Land acquisition and construction of a new public park in an area of high need.



IMPLEMENTATION GRANT PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

- + One-page cover letter
- + Contact information
- + Executive summary
- + Proposal narrative

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

- + Purpose and rationale
- + Proposed projects and/or programs
- + Roles and responsibilities
- + Proposed outcomes
- + Project funding
- + Community engagement strategy
- + Sustainability and maintenance
- + Risk and mitigation strategies

Refer to pp. 8-10 of the RFP for more detail.





IMPLEMENTATION GRANT PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

- + Implementation timeline
- + Budget
- + Budget narrative
- + Letters of support
- + Appendices

IMPLEMENTATION GRANT SELECTION CRITERIA

- + Compelling, furthers the initiative’s aims and addresses the guiding questions and priorities.
- + Demonstrates significant breadth, depth and quality of engagement of a broad group of community stakeholders and residents.
- + Describes compelling and feasible outcomes, along with performance indicators that will be monitored to gauge progress toward outcomes.
- + Describes park projects that will have longevity in their communities.
- + Demonstrates the necessary financial and human resources secured to execute the project.

Refer to pp. 7-8 of the RFP for more detail.

IMPLEMENTATION GRANT SELECTION CRITERIA

- + Budget and grant amount requested are reasonable and proportionate to the scale of the proposed projects and programs, anticipated impact, and community benefit.
- + Includes credible plan for developing resources to address funding gaps, if total funding needed is greater than the request.
- + Describes possible obstacles and difficulties in implementing proposed project; includes mitigation strategies.
- + Describes feasible plan to sustain and maintain the project and any associated programming after the grant has ended.

Refer to pp. 7-8 of the RFP for more detail.

Questions & Answers

Q: Will every city or town that submits a Planning Grant proposal receive funding?

A: ICDP has allocated enough funds to award planning grants to all invited and eligible applicants who submit a complete and satisfactory proposal that addresses the initiative's aims and objectives; however, ICDP reserves the right to decline any proposal.

Q: Can a city or town that has already engaged in park planning activities (e.g., parks master plan development) skip the Phase 1 planning period and still be eligible to submit a Phase 2 competitive Implementation Grant proposal?

A: No, an invited city or town must participate in Phase 1 of the CPI to be eligible to participate in Phase 2.

Q: Can Planning Grants be used to support existing parks planning efforts or must Planning Grants be used for new efforts?

A: Planning Grants can be used to support a variety of activities, including those related to new planning efforts as well as those that are already underway.

Q: What can the Planning Grants be used for?

A: Planning Grants should be used to conduct comprehensive assessment and planning activities that align with the aims of the initiative, address the initiative's guiding questions, and if desired, prepare a proposal for the competitive phase of the initiative.

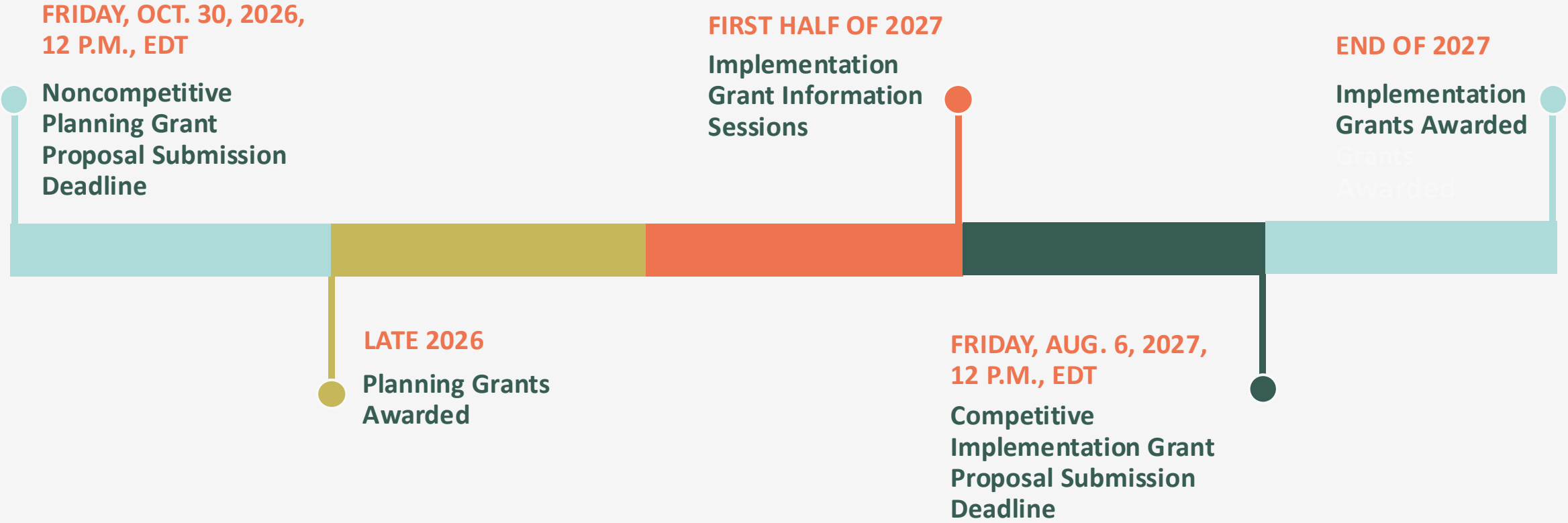
Planning Grants are meant to support a range of planning and assessment activities that engage a broad group of community stakeholders and are relevant to each community's local context.

Refer to p. 4 of the RFP for a non-exhaustive list of acceptable uses.

Q: Will funding be disbursed on a reimbursement basis?

A: No. Funding will be disbursed after a grant agreement is signed by both the grantee and ICDP.

TIMELINE



GRANT PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

NOTIFICATIONS

During the grant proposal review process, the Community Parks Initiative will provide you with notifications through the Submittable grant platform. You'll receive notifications:

- + Once your Planning Grant proposal is successfully submitted.
- + If your proposal has been deemed complete and is being reviewed.
- + If you are awarded a Planning Grant.
- + If your proposal is denied for funding.

Refer to pp. 7-8 of the RFP for more detail.

Submittable Platform Overview

Community Parks Initiative Phase 1 Planning Grant Application

Guidelines ^

Apply

Welcome to the Community Parks Initiative Phase 1 Planning Grant Application!

Through the Submittable platform you will upload documents and enter information in the fields provided that will become your Planning Grant Application. Only completed applications from invited cities and towns will be considered. [Click here to view the list.](#)

Please review the full details of the **Community Parks Initiative** in the [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP). Phase 1 planning grant guidelines start on page 3 of the RFP.

Once you hit "Apply", the platform will take you through each of the required elements for a complete application. You can work on the elements of the application in any order and save as you go.

If you have questions about how to use Submittable for this application, please review the Submittable Guide that you can download [here](#). Submittable works best on Google Chrome, Firefox, and Safari. **Internet Explorer is not supported.** Please make sure you are using a supported browser.

Planning grant proposals are due by 12 p.m. EDT on October 30, 2026.

Please note: The individual who starts the form in Submittable will automatically be the form owner. They will be the only individual who can submit the form. Want to add others to contribute to your application? Add them as Collaborators. Instructions on how to add Collaborators can be found in the Submittable Guide [here](#) and are available once you begin your application.

Do you have questions about the Community Parks Initiative? Please email info@indianacpi.org.

Ready to get started? Hit "Apply" to start your application.

SUBMITTABLE

- + Click the "APPLY" button at the top of the CPI website (www.indianacpi.org).
- + Create your Submittable login.
- + Follow the prompts to create your proposal.
- + Submittable guide is available at www.indianacpi.org.

Resources



RESOURCES

- + Information Session slides will be posted to www.indianacpi.org.
- + If you have specific questions that aren't answered by the FAQs on the CPI website, email info@indianacpi.org.



COMMUNITY PARKS INITIATIVE