

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION | LEGISLATIVE GRANT MANAGEMENT BUREAU

Regional Recreation Centers & Quality of Life Grant Program

Special appropriations supporting local recreation infrastructure statewide

WHAT THE PROGRAM DOES

This funding exists to improve the quality of life for New Mexico residents by creating new or expanding existing regional recreational facilities — any project that contributes to the quality of life for regional residents, such as a community center, skatepark, rodeo grounds, picnic shelter, or other structure that enhances public recreational activity.

Funding Source

Funded through special appropriations approved by the Legislature. In FY2022 and FY2023, projects were funded with State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) appropriated by the Legislature; the most recent appropriation — 2025 HB2 — provided **\$50,000,000** in State General Fund dollars for FY2026.



City of Grants Multi-Purpose Arena – a prior-cycle funded facility

Eligible Applicants

New Mexico local government entities: municipalities, counties, tribal governments, and special districts.

ELIGIBLE PROJECT TYPES

- Community centers or wellness hubs
- Indoor / outdoor recreation spaces
- Cultural or multigenerational gathering areas
- Accessibility and inclusion upgrades
- Adaptive fitness or play equipment
- Outdoor structures (skateparks, splash pads, amphitheaters)

✗ Not eligible: Trail systems Vehicles Operations / programming Maintenance Duplicative of ORD grants

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- **Economic impact:** demonstrable benefit to a community with limited access to recreational activities — by attracting/retaining residents or attracting visitors.
- **Public access:** project must be open for public use. Tribal-land projects are eligible and need not be open to the general public, but should be open to tribal members.

APPLICATION SCORING CRITERIA

- Recreational impact / quality-of-life value
- Equity — underserved, limited-opportunity communities
- Comprehensive plan & future maintenance/programming funding
- Local public body vetting and approval
- Shovel-readiness / timeline to start
- Applicant fiscal compliance with DFA
- Prior Capital Outlay or other funding history
- Other state or federal funding received

PROGRAM RESULTS & TRACK RECORD

Multi-Year Program Outcomes

Recreation & quality-of-life investments across recent appropriation cycles

\$50M

FY2026 APPROPRIATION (2025 HB2)

128

PROJECTS FUNDED OVERALL

\$142.5M

TOTAL PROGRAM INVESTMENT FROM THE LEGISLATURE

Of the FY2026 cycle, DFA Secretary Wayne Propst noted these projects "create more welcoming community spaces, boost public health, and deepen local connection across our state," reflecting the Department's continued partnership with local governments on community-driven recreation projects.



Sierra County - Arrey Baseball Field, a prior-cycle funded project



Deming Waterpark, a prior-cycle funded aquatic facility

REPRESENTATIVE AWARDS (FY2026 CYCLE)

- Albuquerque - Balloon Fiesta Park ADA improvements
- Carlsbad - senior outdoor recreation & walking path
- Clayton - Event Center development
- Hatch - community center splash pad
- Lincoln County - regional recreation area expansion
- Santa Rosa - Blue Hole master plan upgrades
- Mescalero Apache Tribe - Veterans Park improvements
- Valencia County - Las Maravillas playground

LGMB SPECIAL-APPROPRIATION RECREATION PORTFOLIO (MULTI-CYCLE SNAPSHOT)

APPROPRIATION CYCLE	FUNDING SOURCE	PROJECTS	TOTAL FUNDING	EXPENDED TO DATE	% EXPENDED
FY2022 (22-ZG1023)	SLFRF	23	\$30,966,026	\$28,957,009	93.5%
FY2023 (23-ZH5053)	SLFRF	43	\$28,172,552	\$25,287,945	89.8%
FY2026 (25-ZJ5047)	General Fund	24	\$45,527,499	\$18,448,614	40.5%

Source: LGMB internal grant-tracking records (PARS). FY2022 and FY2023 cycles were funded with State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) appropriated by the Legislature; FY2026 was funded with State General Fund dollars (2025 HB2). FY2026 figures reflect projects still in their performance period; reversion dates run through June 2026-2027.

TRENDS IN PROJECT TYPES FUNDED (FY22-FY26 COMBINED, 82 PROJECTS)

PROJECT TYPE	PROJECTS	SHARE	TOTAL FUNDING
Parks & fairgrounds	25	30%	\$31,942,190
Sports complexes, fields & arenas	16	20%	\$14,391,037
Community, event & senior centers	14	17%	\$19,254,146
General recreation centers/complexes	9	11%	\$15,831,088
Aquatic facilities & splash pads	6	7%	\$4,130,982
Museums, cultural & civic facilities	5	6%	\$6,933,738
Playgrounds, picnic areas & shelters	2	2%	\$277,542
On-site bike/pump-track amenity	1	1%	\$600,000

Source: LGMB internal grant-tracking records (PARS) for appropriation cycles 22-ZG1023, 23-ZH5053, and 25-ZJ5047; projects categorized by project title. The single bike/pump-track project is an on-site amenity at a park, distinct from off-site trail systems, which are not an eligible project type under this grant.

What the Trend Shows

Parks and fairground improvements remain the single largest category by both project count and dollars across all three cycles, followed by sports facilities and community/event/senior centers. Aquatic facilities, museums/cultural sites, and playgrounds make up a small but consistent share each cycle — reflecting broad, general-purpose demand for basic outdoor and gathering-space recreation infrastructure over single-use or niche facility types.