
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33601**

BOCC POLICY: SECTION NUMBER 01.31.02.00

SUBJECT: LAKE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM
EFFECTIVE DATE: June 7, 2017
SUPERSEDES: New

PURPOSE:

To promote environmentally sustainable management strategies for lakes, and to achieve improvements in water quality and ecosystem integrity in unincorporated Hillsborough County, the Lake Improvement Grant Program is established.

POLICY:

Available grant funds will be awarded to applicants selected pursuant to this policy on a minimum of 1 (applicant):1 (County) matching basis. No award recipient shall receive more than \$5,000 per project. Each lake shall be considered as a separate project. The total amount awarded by the County for all projects shall not exceed \$50,000 in any fiscal year. Grants are intended for water quality improvement, and no grants shall be awarded solely for improvement of aesthetic appearance or recreational benefit. An award recipient shall not be eligible for an additional award for the same lake for five (5) years from the date of the most recent award. To the extent feasible, County staff is also authorized to provide technical assistance to the applicant in connection with any project.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:

Applications will be evaluated and prioritized by County staff based on the requirements outlined in this Policy.

FINAL DECISION ON AWARDS:

The staff recommendations will be forwarded to the BOCC for final approval. The BOCC has final discretion over all applications presented for consideration under the Program, possesses sole and final decision-making authority for determining eligibility and budgetary appropriations for the Program, and reserves the right to deny approval of any application, in its sole and absolute discretion.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Project Requirements:

All of the following requirements must be met for a Project to be eligible for funding under this program:

1. The Project must be located in unincorporated Hillsborough County and be directly associated with a natural lake. For a lake to be eligible, one of the following criteria must be met: 1) The County must own a portion of the lake or property abutting the lake, or 2) the County must possess one or more drainage easements associated with the lake, or 3) the lake must receive water from, or discharge water to, the County's storm water drainage system. County grant funds may be used for vegetation management and/or other water quality improvements on or around the lake.
2. The applicant must match all of the County grant funds by at least a 1:1 ratio. Matching funds may be provided directly by applicant or by one or more non-governmental third parties working in conjunction with the applicant on the Project.
3. Applications must demonstrate that the total Project budget will be covered by committed available funding sources plus the requested County match.
4. All work must be performed in compliance with all applicable laws, including all required permits.
5. Prior to distribution of any grant funds, which will be provided on a cost reimbursement basis, the Project must be completed and the applicant's funds must be expended.
6. Funds cannot be used for acquisition of real property.
7. Work must be completed within twelve (12) months of execution of the Funding Agreement between the County and Applicant.
8. Neither applicant nor any source of matching funds may be a federal, state, or local government, or other public body, agency, department, instrumentality, political subdivision, municipality, or district thereof.

Application Requirements:

The application for a Lake Improvement Grant shall be complete and include all documentation necessary for the County to thoroughly review the Project. The following items shall be submitted by the applicant.

Part A – Introduction

The applicant shall provide an overview of the Project that shall not exceed one 8.5 x 11 page.

In addition to the overview, the following information shall be provided:

1. Real Estate Folio number(s) of all properties that abut and/or contain the lake
2. Names of the owner(s) of all properties that abut and/or contain the lake (Note: as part of any Funding Agreement written consent to the Project by all property owners owning a portion of the lake or abutting the lake will be required. The County Administrator or designee may waive this requirement for consent by all property owners in his or her discretion in appropriate circumstances.)
3. Name of Applicant(s) (must be property owner(s) on lake)
4. Contact information for all parties – Applicant(s), Contractors, and Consultants
5. Brief description of any previous work done to improve water quality, including management of vegetation in the lake.
6. Grant amount requested, applicant matching funds amount, and total project cost.

Part B – Description of Project

The applicant shall provide a description of activities to be carried out as part of the Project to include the following:

1. Project boundary
2. Activities to be conducted
3. Method for work to be conducted and type of any mechanical equipment to be used
4. Photographs of existing conditions with attached notes describing work to be carried out.
5. Method for disposal of material to be removed
6. Any permitting required, permits applied for, or permits obtained
7. Project schedule
8. Any additional documentation necessary to describe the scope of the Project may be provided

Part C – Financial elements

The applicant shall provide all financial information necessary to evaluate conformance with the financial requirements of the Grant Program, including overall Project budget, the amount of the grant requested and the proposed activities for which the grant will be used, amount of matching funds provided by the applicant, all sources of project funding, and an itemized list of expenditures necessary to accomplish the Project.

Part D – Review Criteria

The applicant shall provide a description of how the Project meets and/or exceeds each of the applicable Review Criteria and sub-criteria (described in this document) as they apply.

Review Criteria:

The following four (4) review criteria shall be used by the County to evaluate all projects. Factors to be considered for each criterion are provided.

1. IMPROVEMENTS TO LAKE CONDITION:

Demonstrates improvements to be made to the lake water quality, including control of nuisance/invasive vegetation if applicable.

2. LEVERAGING:

- Demonstrates monetary leverage of private funds to County matching funds of 1:1 (or greater).

3. QUALITY OF PROJECT:

- Demonstrates appropriate regulatory compliance/permitting.
- Demonstrates the ability to achieve a successful Project result including proper disposal of any material removed.

4. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:

- Provides appropriate criteria and milestones for determining/measuring the success of the Project in achieving the plan and schedule.
- Defines relevant outcome indicators and targets (such as achievement of desired area of vegetation control, removal of pollutant sources, number of native aquatic plants installed, etc.).

Funding Process after approval by the County Staff and the BOCC

Applicants selected to receive matching grant funding will be required to enter into a formal Funding Agreement with the County specifying the dollar amount awarded, how outcomes will be measured, contract duration, the terms of funding and other Agreement terms. As part of the Funding Agreement written consent to the Project will be required by all property owners owning a portion of the lake or abutting the lake, unless this requirement is waived by the County Administrator or designee.

Where applicable, the payments may be made directly to the Project Contractor(s). Proper documentation of the Project expenses that are reasonable in amount and directly related to and necessary for completion of the Project will be required prior to disbursement.

Within sixty (60) days of the completion of the Project, the Grantee shall submit to the County a request for payment, as well as applicable Project invoices. It is the intent of the Program to disburse payment(s) upon receipt of an acceptable invoice(s) and satisfactory inspection of the Project by authorized representatives(s) of the County and all other local or State governmental

agencies with jurisdiction over the Project, and verification that the Project has been completed according to the application submission, Project Funding Agreement, permits and approvals, and related Project documents, including certification of applicant’s supervising professionals (where applicable).

Upon approval of the Funding Agreement by the Board of County Commissioners, funds will be appropriated/committed for the Project. At final Project completion and closeout, any remaining unspent funds will be returned to the reserves of the Hillsborough County “Lake Improvement Grant” Program.

ETHICS POLICY:

Applicants shall act in accordance with all applicable Hillsborough County Ethics policies and requirements.

APPLICABILITY OF BOCC POLICY 03.02.02.28:

BOCC Policy 03.02.02.28 regarding Method of Funding Citizen Initiated Localized Capital Projects or Services shall not apply to the activities undertaken pursuant to this Policy.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It shall be the responsibility of the County Administrator or designated representative to manage this policy and ensure compliance with the above guideline and procedure.

Approved: Board of County Commissioners

Approval Date: June 7, 2017