



PARTNERSHIP FUND

Central Valley Park Access & Activation Grants

GRANT APPLICATION RESOURCES

Grant Resources

The following materials were referred to in the Guidelines and may assist in developing your project proposal and writing your application:

- *Park Equity Strategies and Project Activities*
- *Selection Criteria and Scoring Matrix*
- *Pre-Application Assistance / Q&A Workshop*
- *Link to Online Application*

If you have questions about the grant application or how to apply, please contact Jen Isacoff at jennifer.isacoff@tpl.org and Amie Patel at amie.patel@tpl.org

Park Equity Strategies + Project Activities

Below is a summary of strategies to increase park equity and access, along with examples of related project activities. Applicants do not need to achieve all strategies - but may use them as a guide as they are helpful. Proposals will be unique to local needs and goals.

1. PARK ACCESS

We fund projects that increase access to quality parks for those who need them most. Funds in this category may go to install or construct physical improvements in a publicly accessible park or green space to facilitate park use for all. Partnership Funds may be used to “close the gap” for shovel-ready projects.

Project types:

New parks , for example: transforming undeveloped or underutilized lands into a usable public park or green space.	Park improvements , for example: adding permanent park amenities such as shade trees, benches, and picnic tables.	Pilot “prototype” improvements , for example: temporary structures such as planter boxes and artwork to help residents visualize and experience future park amenities.
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2. PROGRAMMING & ACTIVATION

We fund projects that encourage increased park use and foster social connections through organized activities, based on community needs and in partnership with the community. Funds may be used to provide new park experiences, activate the site with consistent programming, and to bring people together to foster meaningful community connections and collaboration. Ideally, projects will identify and invest in community skills and assets.

Project types:

Park stewardship and volunteerism , for example: tree-planting programs, volunteer, or public service activities, or “friends-of” programs.	Park programming, activation, recreation , for example: sport or recreation leagues, arts or cultural programs, or gardening groups.
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3. PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We fund projects that foster intentional collaboration and relationship-building between municipal government and nonprofit organizations or neighborhood groups, members of different social groups, or non-traditional partners *towards a specific, defined purpose* related to park equity and access.

Project types:

Relationship building , for example: hire community organizers, spend time at existing community events, build trust with residents who have close ties with the community.	Capacity building , for example: organizational skill-building, leadership capabilities; inclusive engagement efforts.	Accessible communication , for example: cultural or language translation, expanded media outreach, interpretive signage.
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4. POLICY & PLANNING

We fund projects that set the conditions to codify community-centered park policies, decision-making guidelines and protocols—to secure park equity within the government’s purview. Funds in this category may be used to engage community members and partners in strategic processes that yield a tangible result.

Project types:

Participatory planning and decision-making , for example: formation of park advisory boards, neighborhood councils, or participatory budgeting programs.	Connect community to public processes , for example: simplify permit process for park use; stewardship; inclusive outreach for available resources and programs	Formal agreements , for example: joint-use agreements, MOUs related to park access and use, creation of stewardship groups.
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Selection Criteria

TPL acknowledges the breadth of organizations in the region, which may have different capacities. We will value thoughtful applications that clearly communicate motivations/intent. Each application and its strengths will be reviewed by the Selection Committee and rated against the following criteria, using a scale from 1 to 7:

- 7 – Truly exceptional*
- 6 – Excellent*
- 5 – Very good*
- 4 – Good*
- 3 – Satisfactory*
- 2 – Unsatisfactory*
- 1 – Very unsatisfactory*

Scoring Criteria

1. Summary of the proposed project

- Clear and compelling summary
- Project is focused on advancing community needs and park equity goals

2. Park access needs or gaps

- Project advances specific city/county/regional plans, initiatives, or goals
- Park need is supported by evidence (such as needs assessments – like TPL’s [ParkServe®](#), community engagement findings, results from your organization or agency’s work in the region, city plans, or initiatives)

3. Primary population

- Proposal clearly articulates NEED within a population the project is trying to reach and describes specific, relevant strategies to reach them
- Project activities are suited to serve the primary population

4. Project Strategies and Activities

- Project strategies are aligned with regional park equity goals and community priorities
- Project activities are suited to serve the primary population and implement the strategy

5. Proposed activities, timeline, key milestones, and products

- Proposed activities are clearly defined
- Proposed activities are meaningful, creative, relevant, and inclusive
- Project has a clear implementation plan and achievable scope within the grant period
- Project has clear plans to demonstrate “visible progress” (i.e., meeting records, design concepts, events and/or construction, as appropriate to the project) by August 30, 2026

6. Project Partners

- The role of any listed partner is clear and distinct. The project presents meaningful roles for potential participation and partnership without barrier or limitation – including agreements for funding allocations, etc.

7. Permits and permissions

- Applicant understands potential permit and permission needs, and offers a thoughtful and practical approach to obtaining them and meeting other challenges.

8. Outcomes for this project; tracking progress and impact

- A reasonable and relevant evaluation plan is proposed (there are clear methods for documenting and tracking the progress and impact of this project)
- Proposed activities clearly intend to offer insights into long term needs or “ladder up” to broader outcomes/impact and park equity goals

9. Relevant prior experience

- Applicant demonstrates skills and experiences that are relevant for implementing the project
- Applicant identifies potential challenges and acknowledges what type of technical assistance will support their success

10. Reasonable project budget

- The budget is reasonable based upon the activities described
- Funding supports or extends capacity and is not only sustaining an organization’s existing operations.

11. Leveraged funds and ongoing sustainability

- Applicant has additional or planned funds to support the pilot project idea
- This Partnership grant funding is meaningful and catalytic to the effort
- The proposed project has the potential to inspire lasting change, be scaled/repeated beyond the grant term

12. Overall impression

- The proposed project is ambitious and exciting!
- Project will be a good illustration of equitable, impactful projects to advance park equity, access and connections in California’s Central Valley

Pre-Application Assistance / Q&A Workshops

Pre-Application Assistance

TPL will host two free, online public information sessions to help applicants develop their project ideas and proposals. In these sessions, we will answer general questions about the grant guidelines, project eligibility, and the application.

The workshops will be held on the following dates (Pacific Time). Please pre-register to join:

- November 18, 2025, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM [Register [HERE](#) for Zoom and Dial-In instructions]
- December 12, 2025, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM [Register [HERE](#) for Zoom and Dial-In instructions]

Contact amie.patel@tpl.org or jennifer.isacoff@tpl.org with questions

Application Link

Application Deadline: ~~January 6~~ **EXTENDED 2 WEEKS! to January 19, 5:00 PM Pacific Time.**

Complete the **Online Application** form at this link:

<https://airtable.com/apppnuDvOc4dMdTkE/pagcplUFC6ypZ1bfn/form>

Application questions are provided in the companion Guidelines and Application document, available here: <https://10minutewalk.org/partnership-fund/>