



## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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PARKS • RECREATION • URBAN FORESTRY • CONSERVATION LANDS • TRAILS

To: Missoula City Council  
From: Shirley Kinsey, Recreation Superintendent  
Date: January 22, 2020  
Re: Update on Recreation/Aquatics Low-Income Grants

Attached is a four-year summary of Parks and Recreation's Share The Fun Youth and Adult Grants program. Since 2015, we have awarded nearly \$115,000 in grants for youth and adult aquatics passes, swim lessons, and recreation programs, serving nearly 1000 families.

About 51% of the grant program's funding comes from community donations and proceeds from the Parks and Recreation license plate\*. The remainder is funded by the Council at \$10,000/year, plus a \$4000 annual contribution from Missoula County, specifically earmarked for County residents.

To receive a grant, families complete a simple form and show evidence of their participation in any government assistance program, like SNAP, WIC, free and reduced lunch, Medicaid, etc. Those who do not receive government assistance may show a recent tax document showing that they meet the income guidelines used by the Montana Free and Reduced Price School Meals program. (182% of federal poverty guidelines.)

Share The Fun Grants are promoted via the Department's triannual Recreation Guide, the City website, social media, and public service announcements. In addition, information about the grant program is circulated several times each year to a wide variety of local social service providers, like Head Start, Missoula Aging Services, Missoula Senior Center, Let's Move Missoula, Missoula Food Bank, and more.

Through community outreach and consultation with other local social services providers, we have learned that merely offering program grants is not meeting the needs of the community's most vulnerable populations.

- Those living in deep poverty (incomes below 50 percent of the poverty threshold), remain in crisis.
- Vulnerable populations are struggling to meet basic needs and facilitate normal daily living activities.
- Finding the time to sign up for a grant, or the resources to travel to special use sites, is often not an option for families in crisis.

*\*Montana Specialty License Plate program, artwork donated by Monte Dolack. Parks has raised \$62,200 for Share The Fun Grants through license plate sales since 2013.*

Strategies to expand our outreach to vulnerable populations include:

- Broad-based system change to reduce institutional or programming barriers that prevent residents from applying for or participating in recreation and aquatics programs.
- Increase income eligibility limits for grants to include more families who are living above the poverty level but well below the median income.
- Simplify the grant application and registration process.
- Institute drop-in recreation programming in targeted neighborhood parks to improve access.
- Ensure openings in some summer camp programs and on sports teams for vulnerable populations.
- Work with key providers to identify individuals and families most in need and provide them with information of nearby options and/or prequalified grants for key programs.
- Apply an Equity and Inclusion lens to our processes, communications, and services.

We are currently working with a coalition of “out-of-school time” (OST) program providers, including Flagship, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, Missoula City-County Health, Invest Health, and Partnership Health to:

- Conduct a citywide survey to identify barriers to participation.
- Learn how we can improve outreach and services our most vulnerable populations.

We continue to collaborate with MCPS to provide community-based recreation programming.

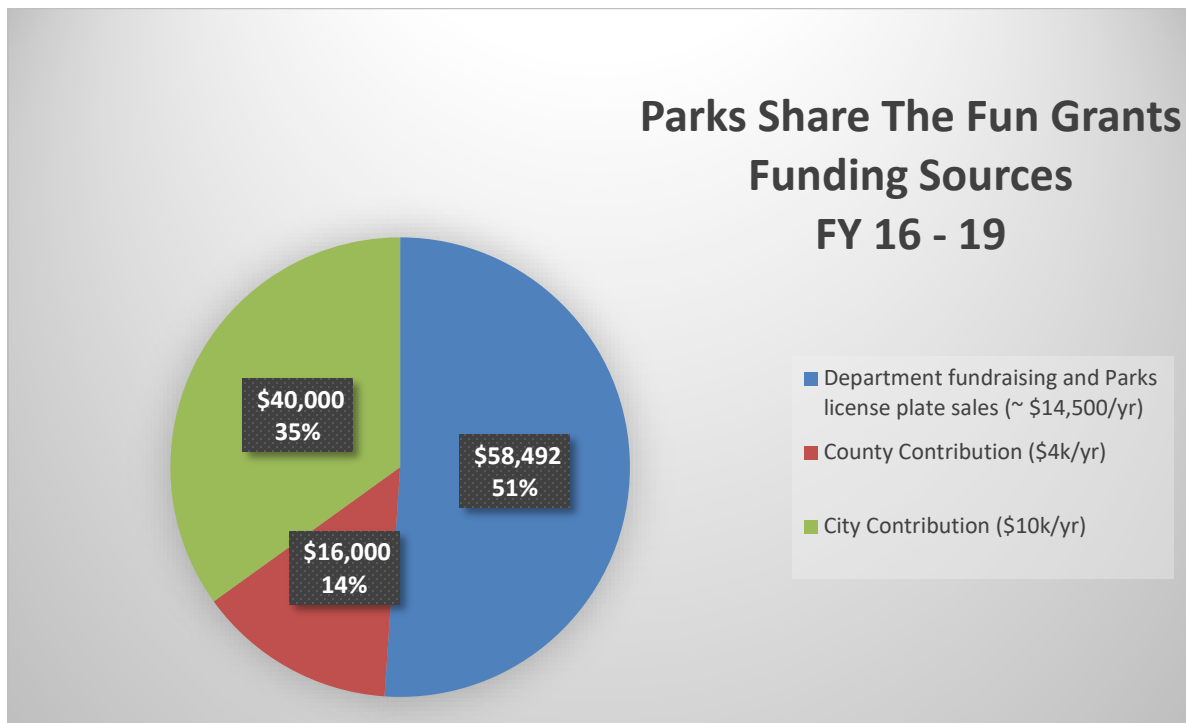
- Morning Move Program at the three elementary schools with the greatest socioeconomic disparities.
- Russell Afterschool Program.
- Lowell Neighborhood Center Initiative - in progress

Programming changes currently in effect or planned:

- Discovery Day Camp – parents can register for just one day, rather than an entire week of day camp. They do not have to pre-register and pay registration fees weeks ahead of time when they might not have the funds to do so.
- We are actively working with families of youth who have been dismissed from other programs due to socioeconomic, behavioral, emotional/psychological disorders.
- Increase inclusive programming for people with disabilities, including summer camps, Zootown Derailleurs, and afterschool programs.

- On-going staff training on inclusion and equity practices to focus on communications and policies.
- Ensure we are using the least restrictive barrier models in designing recreation and aquatics programs.

Thank you for your attention to this important City service. Below you will find some statistics on the disbursement of grant funds over the last four years. I look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions for improving our services and outreach to Missoula's low-income residents.



## Share The Fun Scholarships Awarded FY 16 - 19

Fiscal Year	Total Scholarship Funds Awarded*	# of Families Served	City Resident Grants Awarded	County Resident Grants Awarded
2015 - 2016	\$35,508	296	\$27,919	\$7,488.00
2016 - 2017	\$21,752	221	\$18,142	\$3,711.25
2017 - 2018	\$23,565	203	\$19,432	\$4,132.75
2018 - 2019	\$33,667	245	\$28,134	\$5,533.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$114,492.00</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>\$93,627.00</b>	<b>\$20,865.00</b>

## City Resident Funding & Programs

Fiscal Year	Aquatics Passes	Swim Lessons	Recreation Programs	# AQ Passes	# Swim Lessons	# Recreation Programs
2015 - 2016	\$16,644	\$2,018	\$9,358	339	86	119
2016 - 2017	\$10,893	\$1,274	\$5,874	199	69	90
2017 - 2018	\$11,279	\$2,785	\$5,368	224	94	78
2018 - 2019	\$16,046	\$4,158	\$7,930	278	132	153
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$54,862.00</b>	<b>\$10,235.00</b>	<b>\$28,530.00</b>	<b>1040</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>440</b>

## County Resident Funding & Programs

Fiscal Year	Scholarship Funds Awarded*	# AQ Passes*	# Swim Lessons*	# Recreation Programs
2015 - 2016	\$7,488	95	44	19
2016 - 2017	\$3,711	38	7	27
2017 - 2018	\$4,133	57	22	10
2018 - 2019	\$5,533	55	28	22
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$20,865.00</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>78</b>



*\*Year-to-year variations in scholarship funds awarded is based on customer demand.*