Medina County Comprehensive Plan Grant Assistance Program

GUIDELINES

Introduction

The Medina County Board of Commissioners (Commissioners) have allocated grant funds to support local communities in planning for their future. This funding provides land use planning assistance to encourage proactive, informed decision-making by local officials.

What is the Comprehensive Plan Grant Assistance Program?

The Comprehensive Plan Grant Assistance Program (Program) offers Medina County communities a one-to-one matching grant for professional planning services. The Commissioners will match up to 50% of eligible project costs, with a maximum grant award of $5,000. In-kind services are not eligible for matching.

To qualify, communities must commit to one of the following:

- Preparing and adopting a comprehensive plan; or
- Implementing a recommendation or policy from an existing comprehensive plan.

Minimum Comprehensive Plan Requirements

Grant funds may be used for the preparation of a comprehensive plan that includes the following elements:

- Future Land Use Plan
- Statement of Goals and Objectives
- Community Facilities Plan
- Natural Resources
- Implementation Strategies

The plan must refer to the *Medina County All Hazard and Mitigation Plan* and include community safety and security components. Additional topics may include:

- Renewable and alternative energy
- Sustainability
- Conservation of land and water resources
- Recycling

Implementation Projects

Communities may also use the grant to fund a specific study or plan that implements a policy or recommendation from a comprehensive plan adopted on or after January 1, 2005.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants include Medina County communities that:

- Have not completed more than 50% of their comprehensive planning process, based on their project timeline; or
- Are prepared to implement recommendations from an adopted comprehensive plan (since January 1, 2005).

Preference is given to applications for new or updated comprehensive plans. Eligibility will also consider:

- Whether a current comprehensive plan exists and its age.
- Development pressure (e.g., population growth, building permits, nearby intense development).
- Environmental impacts experienced within the past five years (e.g., flooding).

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on consistency with Program goals adopted by the Medina County Planning Commission and Commissioners. Proposals to implement policies must demonstrate alignment with the original goals and objectives of the adopted comprehensive plan.

How to Apply

Applications are available from the Medina County Department of Planning Services (DPS).

- Applications must be approved at a public meeting and signed by a majority of local officials (trustees, CEO, or council members).
- A resolution must be submitted indicating the community's financial commitment to the project.
- A written justification statement must explain why the community should receive the grant, addressing the Program's goals.

Mandatory Pre-Application Meeting

All applicants must meet with DPS staff prior to submitting an application. Applications submitted without a prior meeting will be deemed ineligible.

Grant Award Process

DPS will review and evaluate all completed applications and submit funding recommendations to the Commissioners, who will make the final award decisions.

Community Responsibilities

Communities awarded grants must:

- Work with DPS to update and adopt their zoning map.
- Form a Comprehensive Plan Committee with diverse community representation.
- Cover mailing costs for community surveys (if applicable).
- Provide zoning education opportunities to local zoning officials within the first year of the Program.

Acceptance of Grant

Grant recipients will receive written notice. Within 30 days, the community must:

1. Accept the grant and submit resolution appropriating matching funds.
2. Finalize a scope of services with DPS (or an approved private consultant).
3. Submit an executed contract or agreement (extensions may be requested).

The community may terminate the contract within 60 days of its start date if necessary.

Grant Fund Disbursement

Communities must provide a cash match equal to or exceeding the grant amount. Disbursements are made as follows:

- Quarterly payments: Up to 75% of the award, based on invoices and Financial Request Forms.
- Final 25%: Upon receipt of the completed plan, adoption by local officials, and final documentation.

The Commissioners will also reimburse up to $300 for zoning education (e.g., workshops or audio conferences) with proper receipts and proof of participation.

Eligible Reimbursable Costs

- Consultant fees
- Educational materials related to planning or zoning
- Mapping and graphic preparation
- Printing and copying costs for the final plan
- Other reasonable planning-related costs

Non-Reimbursable Costs

- Travel, parking, transportation
- Meals, alcohol, entertainment, tips
- Credit card fees, interest charges
- Fines, penalties, taxes
- Advertisement or unrelated expenses

Project Timeline and Deadlines

- The planning or implementation process must begin within two years of grant acceptance, including committee meetings, public engagement, survey preparation, and drafting goals or maps.
- The comprehensive plan must be completed within two years to receive final funding.
    - A one-year extension may be granted upon request.
    - Further six-month extensions may be considered by the Planning Commission as needed.

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GOALS

GOAL 1

Provide land use planning assistance to those areas in the community needing it the most.
Demonstrate need based on development pressures from within and outside the community (development trends indicating population growth or decline, new home permits, active subdivision activity, and existence of a comprehensive plan).

GOAL 2

Involve public participation in the planning process.
Utilize qualitative and quantitative research as evidence for planned community surveys, focus groups, public hearings and meetings. Proposed combined planning efforts with community non-profit organizations, such as chambers of commerce, social organizations, home owner associations, etc.

GOAL 3

Provide a thorough and complete comprehensive plan or implementation project.
A final comprehensive plan document shall include a future land use plan, statement of goals and objectives, community facilities plan, natural resources, and implementation strategies; an implementation project will include public participation, analysis of appropriate data and related statements to complete a proposed study or report.

GOAL 4

Link goals or plan recommendations to safety and security and zoning regulations updates.
Include reference to Medina County All Hazard Mitigation Plan and Planning for Safe Community philosophy. Community must implement official zoning map amendments, when indicated, and implement plan recommendations pertaining to zoning regulations.

GOAL 5

Commit to implement goals or recommendations from the plan.
Community must commit to implement plan recommendations pertaining to other land use goals and objectives, emergency management, education, community facilities, natural resources, etc.

GOAL 6

Commit to encourage and provide education to officials and the public.
Community must commit to:

a. Reimburse employees or representatives for educational workshops, seminars, or classes.
b. Participate in county training sessions.
c. Implement locally-defined elements of a public information and public education Program during or immediately following Comprehensive Plan process.

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GUIDELINES

Please read the entire Guidelines and Application Forms, and make sure you understand all requirements before beginning the application. All narrative responses should be typed on in this application or on attached additional sheets.

Community **Contact**

Address

Phone **Email**

Purpose of Request

- ☐ New Comprehensive Plan
- ☐ Update of current Plan
- ☐ Implementation of Plan Recommendation

Amount of Grant Award requested (Maximum $5,000)

Please complete the following questions (provide details):

1. Year of Comprehensive Plan or update
2. Unique community development pressure?
   a. Percentage of Population Growth over last decade.
   b. Number of new residential building permits for the last 5 years.
   c. Intense development in contiguous community? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Year of formal zoning resolution or code update.
4. Year of official zoning map update?

5. Are you currently in the process of planning efforts? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. If yes, please explain the zoning and planning activities that are currently being performed by community officials?

7. What is the nature of the recommendation, goal or proposed policy from the Comprehensive Plan for which grant funds are requested? (Please state policy, goal or recommendation directly from the Comprehensive Plan document).

8. What steps have been taken to implement this recommendation or goal to date?

The following information must be provided by the applicant:

1. Completed Grant Application form.
2. Written explanation of zoning and planning activities that are currently being performed by community officials.
3. A copy of the governing body Resolution of Intent to participate in the Grant Program.
4. A type-written justification statement explaining responses to each of the above questions, and the reasons, including any future infrastructure projects or unique activity, for requesting to be a recipient of the grant.
5. Provide, in writing, detailed responses the Grant Program Goals as they apply to your request.
6. If a contract or agreement currently exists, provide a copy of the Scope of Services including the budget.

Please send the completed application through email at dtesta@medinacounty.gov or through ground mail service at 144 N. Broadway Suite 206, Medina OH 44256. For more information, please contact Planning Services at (330)722-9293.