



Informational Memorandum

TO: NRPA MEMBERS

FROM: NRPA PUBLIC POLICY & ADVOCACY TEAM

DATE: APRIL 4, 2022

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING PROCESS FOR FY2023 APPROPRIATIONS

Earmarks – aka ‘Community Project Funding’ Return for a Second Consecutive Year

As it did for fiscal year 2022, Congress will once again be accepting proposals for earmarks, or “Community Project Funding,” for fiscal year 2023. Congress provided funding for many park and recreation related projects in FY 2022, and we expect them to do the same in FY 2023. This money is a potentially important source of funding for capital projects for your community.

An “earmark” directs federal funding to a specific project in a congressional member’s district. Earmarks allow Congress to allocate funding for specific projects or programs without having to go through the standard appropriations process. A funding allocation per earmark is typically determined by the chair and ranking member of the appropriations committee.

Despite being delayed significantly, the final FY2022 appropriations bill was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Biden on March 15, 2022, including billions in funding for earmark projects.

The FY2023 process for Community Project Funding allocations will be nearly identical to the FY2022 process. However, this year, members of Congress can submit as many as 15 requests, up from 10 requests last year.

Background

Historically, earmarks have been used to advance priority spending projects requested by members of Congress — a tool to encourage compromise and negotiation.

In 2011, the House of Representatives ended the practice of earmarks. Earmarks had long been criticized for their lack of transparency, and opponents stated earmarks promoted unnecessary spending, a.k.a. “pork.” However, earmark supporters assert that this targeted funding strengthens congressional control over how federal dollars are spent and allow members to better deliver on the needs of their district.



Guidelines for Earmarks

Community Project Funding may only be applied to non-profits, state and/or local institutions. Each member of Congress can submit up to a maximum of 15 requests for consideration by the Appropriations Committee (requests are not guaranteed to be funded) in FY23. Members must provide evidence of community support for the project, which the Appropriations Committee considers “crucial” for determining which projects will be funded. The total available funding will be capped at 1 percent of spending, or \$15 billion, whichever figure is lower.

In the interest of transparency and accountability, the Appropriations Committee requires all funding requests to be submitted online and will release the full list of funded projects. All projects must prove that they have no financial ties to the member of Congress submitting the request or their family members. The rules also require the Government Accountability Office to audit a sample of enacted funding requests and submit their findings to Congress.

Flow and Timing of Requests

Members of Congress can begin submitting projects to the House Appropriations Committee’s official database on April 4, 2022, and the process will remain open until the last week of April with slightly different deadlines for requests to the various subcommittees.

How to Submit Projects

Now is the time to speak with your city council, mayor, city manager and member of Congress about potential projects that have broad community support. Members of Congress will be selecting projects in the coming days, so it is important to act quickly.

Deadlines for members of Congress to submit requests to each House Appropriations Subcommittee are provided below. **Most park-relevant requests will fall under the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies or the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies**, but all deadlines are included for reference. Bear in mind, these deadlines are for members of Congress to make their submissions to the committee, and each congressional office may have its own internal review process for project proposals. So, it’s important that you contact your member of Congress’ district office right away to find out about their internal submission process and deadlines.



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- Financial Services and General Government
- Legislative Branch
- Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
- State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

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- Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
- Defense
- Homeland Security
- Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

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- Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
- Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
- Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
- Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies