

POLICY for FUNDING NATURAL and RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

I. PURPOSE

The Yates County Legislature seeks to establish a policy for funding Natural and Recreational Resources and desires to partner with other levels of government and private organizations to:

- protect and preserve natural and recreational resources in Yates County;
- preserve and develop recreational trail corridors that cross municipal borders and
- to develop outdoor recreation facilities that are intended to serve all county residents.

II. AUTHORITY

The Yates County Legislature holds executive, fiduciary and legislative authority for Yates County government and makes the final determination for budgetary appropriations.

III. SCOPE

The Yates County Comprehensive Plan, along with the County Planning Guideline “Looking Ahead”, identified the need for protection, preservation and development of the County’s natural and recreational resources. The policy is intended to promote and to provide support to those groups pursuing related projects.

The following are excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan and “Looking Ahead”:

- “Ensure preservation of unique . . . lands and areas. Take actions to prevent development of lands identified as having a flood hazard or displaying excessive slope,” as well as “. . . to protect environmentally sensitive lands and unique areas.”
- “Give adequate consideration to recreational needs as a part of county comprehensive plans.”

The Comprehensive Plan and the Planning Guideline establish the initial framework from which the funding policies and protocols are derived.

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. “Legislature” is defined as the Yates County Legislature.
2. “Looking Ahead” is the planning guideline created in 1999.
3. “Natural and Recreational Resources” are defined as locations, property, and/or destinations within the County that provide an opportunity for citizens to experience and interact with such a resource (i.e. outdoor recreational center, parks, trails, historic tours, etc). A resource may not only be a fixed physical location but a defined program that incorporates either or both elements within its scope.
4. “Other Levels of Government” are defined as Federal, New York State, County, Town and Village governments.
5. “Private Organizations” are defined as organizations that are not other levels of government and may or may not be not-for-profit organizations as defined by the United States Internal Revenue Code.
6. “Yates County Comprehensive Plan” is the document of the same title created in 1975.

V. POLICY

1. Funding – The following will be considered when determining funding for projects.

1. Up to twenty percent (20%) of the net amount realized by Yates County from Occupancy Tax collections during the previous year will be designated as the total funding level.
2. Funding in a given year may be fully allocated to various entities, but is not required to be. Funds remaining at the end of a budget year may be reallocated and added to funding available in a subsequent budget year.
3. Funding for any single applicant in a given year shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total amount available for that year.
4. Entities may make application for funding in multiple years.
5. The County funding portion may be up to the total project cost. Applicants should be aware, however, that rare circumstances of demonstrated need must be present.
6. Normally, a match (up to 50%) may be required from the applicant. In-kind services (volunteer labor, etc.) may be considered as part or all of the match.
7. Funds from this source may be considered as a match for grants from others (e.g. – New York State, Federal, etc.)
2. Project Eligibility Criteria – The proposed project must meet all of the following, as a minimum.
 1. The property owner is a willing participant in the project.
 2. The applicant or its authorized agent will be responsible for property management and stewardship, except for the addition of land adjacent to county-owned property.
 3. The proposal clearly demonstrates that it is consistent with Policies as identified in the Yates County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Guidelines.
3. Project Priority Criteria – The proposed project must substantially further at least one of the following objectives.
 1. Substantially protects, preserves, or develops land, natural or recreational resources.
 2. Provides public access to Canandaigua, Keuka and/or Seneca Lake.
 3. Protects land that is adjacent to permanently protected open space, including both natural and agricultural lands.
 4. Protects land on an existing or potential inter-municipal trail corridor.
 5. Protects a high concentration of Prime Soils or Soils of Statewide Significance.
 6. Protects a Distinctive or Noteworthy view as identified in the Yates County Scenic Planning Guidelines.
 7. Provides for an expanded and/or enhanced recreational use for the public.
 8. Protects water quality of the lakes.
 9. Enables the furtherance of the policies set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.
 10. Enables research studies and surveys whose purpose is consistent with the policies described herein.

The above should be considered, but are not necessarily all-encompassing. This Policy should be revised as necessary when additional determinations are forthcoming.

VI. PROCEDURE

1. Project proposals will be accepted by the Yates County Planning Department on an on-going basis. Applications forms may be obtained from the Planning Department.
2. Projects that meet the Project Eligibility Criteria and at least one of the Project Priority Criteria will be brought to the Finance Committee for evaluation. The Finance Committee may wish to include representatives from other organizations (e.g. – Soil and Water Conservation District, Cornell Cooperative Extension, etc.) in addition to the Planner. All

- recommendations for funding by the Committee will be presented to the full Legislature for approval and inclusion in the county budget, as appropriate.
3. The project will also be presented to the town or village in which the project is located, unless the project is sponsored by the municipality.
 4. Evaluation of the project will include consideration of how the project would contribute to implementing the Comprehensive Plan and Planning Guidelines, as well as any input provided by the local municipality.
 5. Once an entity has been approved for funding, the Planning Office will work with the County Attorney and representative(s) of the entity to create a contract, monitor progress and close out the contract.
 6. Applicants should be aware of other funding deadlines when applying for support via Yates County so that the County review may be accomplished in time and in coordination with other potential funding sources.
 7. Please note that this is a reimbursement grant and funding disbursements will occur after the required invoicing and release-of –lien documentation has been received by the County for the project. Disbursement terms may be adjusted based on specific project needs and contractual requirements.

END OF POLICY DOCUMENT