



TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT
FY 2023-24 Waterways Accessibility for Tennessee Recreation (WATR) Grant Overview

Applications Open: Tuesday, December 12, 2023
Applications Due by: 2:00 p.m. CT, Friday, May 3, 2024

General Eligibility Requirements:

Who is Eligible:

A marina is eligible to apply for the WATR Program if it is located in the state of Tennessee, is a business entity registered with the Tennessee Secretary of State and remits an annual payment in lieu of tax (PILOT) as well as a property tax assessment through the county in which the marina is located. In order to prove eligibility, the marina must provide evidence of registration with the Tennessee Secretary of State or county in which it does business, proof of payment of both PILOT and property tax assessment for the county in which the marina is located for the previous calendar year unless exempt (see below). Types of proof allowed are set out in Program Policy.

Amount of Award:

Eligible marinas with approved projects will be awarded up to one-third (1/3) of the total previous years' payment in lieu of tax ("PILOT") and property taxes assessed by the county in which the marina is located. *Note: Award amount will be determined based on the total number of applications received and total available funds.*

Proof of Payment Requirement:

The marina must provide evidence of registration with the Tennessee Secretary of State or county in which it does business and proof of payment of both PILOT and property tax assessment for the county in which the marina is located for the previous calendar year.

The eligible marina shall utilize grant funds to reimburse the approved project submitted in connection with the Grantee's application. All supporting documents, such as vendor invoices and proof of payment to vendors for the project, are due with the application.

Proof of Payment Requirement Exception:

If an otherwise eligible marina has not remitted the PILOT and local county tax on the basis of waiver due to low water levels or other exemption as deemed by the PILOT-enforcing agency, the eligible marina may still be considered as eligible, if proof of payment for the year prior to the waiver taking place is submitted.

Post Approval Reporting:

Grantees must submit an Expenditures and Accounting Report within thirty (30) days as set out in Section C.4. of the Contract. The report shall be submitted electronically to Andi.Grindley@tn.gov and MaryKatelyn.Price@tn.gov. The report shall include the following, as applicable:

- a) Numerical break-down of increase in visitation, if visitation was expected to increase based upon the approved project, e.g. restaurant construction, Grantee shall include how much visitation increased; and/or,
- b) Numerical break-down of additional revenue, if revenue was expected to increase based upon the approved project, e.g. purchase of additional pontoon boats for rental, Grantee shall include how revenue increased; and/or

- c) Written summary of enhanced visitor experience, if the visitor experience was expected to be enhanced based upon the approved project, e.g. improvement in lighting, paved parking, or upgrade to Wi-Fi.

Important Dates:

- Applications open on Tuesday, December 12, 2023.
- Completed applications are due by 2:00 p.m. CT, Friday, May 3, 2024.
- Grant award notifications will be made on Friday, May 10, 2024, regardless of when the application is submitted.
- Once awarded, signed contracts should be returned by Friday, May 31, 2024.

**TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT
FY 2023-24 Waterways Accessibility for Tennessee Recreation (WATR) Grant FAQ**

What marinas qualify for the grant?

Marinas that are not owned by or leased from the State of Tennessee or city/county municipalities and remit an annual payment in lieu of tax (PILOT) as well as a property tax assessment through the county in which the marina is located.

How much can I apply for?

Marinas can apply for up to one-third (1/3) of the PILOT paid to TVA, the Army Corps of Engineers, or the US Forest Service in the prior year and property taxes assessed by the county in which the marina is located. Marinas applying must show proof of the amount paid per the agreement. *Note: Award amount will be determined based on the total number of applications received and total available funds.*

What types of projects qualify?

Marketing or infrastructure projects that enhanced the operation of the marina or experience for the visitor. Projects completed during the grant contract term: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

What projects do not qualify?

Projects that do not enhance the operation of the marina or experience for the visitor to the marina. Projects completed outside the grant contract term: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

What documentation is needed?

- An explanation of how the funds were used to enhance the operation of the marina or experience for the visitor to the marina
- Copies of invoices from vendors
- Proof of payment for invoices, PILOT and county property taxes
 - Bank/card statements, copies of cleared check backs or a statement from the vendor showing a zero balance are acceptable forms of proof of payment.
 - ****Please note, we cannot accept QuickBooks-type reports, copies of the front of the check only or the check stub as proof of payment****

When will funds be dispersed?

Once contracts are fully executed. Remember, all invoices and proof of payment are due with applications.

If I do not pay PILOT, am I eligible to apply?

No, this grant program is limited to marinas that remit an annual payment in lieu of tax (PILOT) and meet all other eligibility criteria. However, if an otherwise eligible marina has not remitted the PILOT and local county tax on the basis of waiver due to low water levels or other exemption as deemed by the PILOT-enforcing agency, the eligible marina may still be considered as eligible, if proof of payment for the year prior to the waiver taking place is submitted.

Do I have to submit a copy of my entire lease with the TVA, Corps of Engineers, US Forest Service?

The entire lease is not required; however, the summary page which details the lease term, fee structure and payment terms is required. Usually this is one of the first pages in the lease packet.

Who should I identify as the main contact for this application?

We suggest the person that will be responsible for managing the project.

For questions or additional information, contact:

Andi.Grindley@tn.gov, 615-741-7994