



Douglas County Natural & Cultural Heritage Grant Program 2021 Grant Application Guidelines

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Heritage Conservation Council of Douglas County promotes the conservation of our cultural and natural heritage to honor our past, enrich our present, and inspire our future. The Heritage Conservation Council makes recommendations to the Douglas County Commission on how to best establish a framework to conserve our natural & cultural heritage for future generations and to enhance economic benefits of tourism, local agriculture, and other endeavors based on such conservation efforts.

The Douglas County Commission has authorized grants funds up to **\$200,000** for the 2021 Douglas County budget to assist with the development and implementation of natural and cultural heritage conservation projects. This is part of an ongoing effort to secure the benefits of our heritage for present and future generations.

In 2011, the Commission adopted the recommendations of the *Natural & Cultural Heritage Task Force Final Report* that a majority of the authorized grant amount, funded by tax dollars should be used for one substantial project each year. These major projects over time would be a visible testament to the ongoing value of the County's significant conservation accomplishments. The remainder of the funds would be directed to target projects that meet smaller and equally important projects of local organizations and qualified individuals working to conserve our heritage.

Major Grants - \$40,000-\$74,000

A major grant project may receive up to 55% of the total allocated funds. A major grant proposal is defined as a proposal requesting at least \$40,000 and no more than \$74,000. Grant projects falling in this category should be large enough to have a major impact on the conservation of our natural and/or cultural resources. These grants are competitive and not every applicant should expect to be awarded funding. **Applicants in this category must make a presentation to the HCC at an open meeting.**

Target Grants – Up to \$39,999

A series of target grant projects may receive up to 30% of allocated funds. Target grant proposals are equally important for conserving Douglas County's natural and/or cultural heritage and applicants may request up to \$39,999. These grants are competitive and not every proposal should expect to be awarded funding. **Applicants in this category are encouraged to make presentations to the HCC at an open meeting.**

Grant Period

Fiscal Year 2021 grant projects are expected to be completed within a 24-month time period from the project start date. The project start date cannot begin until after grant awards are announced in May.

Reimbursable Grant Program

Except for grants in the amount of \$5,000 or less, the Natural & Cultural Heritage Grant Program should be treated as a reimbursable grant. The grant recipient shall pay, in full, all the costs of the project as they become due and payable. Progress payments or monthly billings for a percentage of the completed project are not reimbursable under this program. This provision should be taken into consideration when calculating the cash flow for the project and itemizing the project budget. (All recipients receiving more than \$5,000 will receive a distribution of 30% of their

grant award at the beginning of the project. Grant recipients of \$5,000 or under will receive the full amount of their award at the beginning of their projects but will be required to file a final report to remain in good standing with the grant program.

For projects on properties or related to structures the applicant must hold title to the property or demonstrate full consent of the property owner.

Individuals or organizations with an open or completed Natural & Cultural Heritage Grant award from 2011-2020 may apply for 2021 grant funds. Applicants may apply for multiple grants to fund separate projects.

IMPORTANT GRANT PROGRAM DATES

Wed., January 6, 2021 2021 grant guidelines and application materials released

January 21, 2021 at 2 pm. Grant Information Session

A one-hour grant information session will be presented and recorded via Zoom. You are not required to attend to be eligible to apply. Join Zoom Meeting at: <https://douglascountyks.org.zoom.us/j/98863514832?pwd=cVJzMHB1MTQ2RjRuUzZMbK5OQlBqUT09>

Meeting ID: 988 6351 4832 Passcode: 750867 Dial in: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Thurs., February 25, 2021 Deadline for required meeting with HCC Program Coordinator via phone/or Zoom.

March 10, 2021 by 5 pm Application submission deadline. Grant applications (up to a maximum of 15 MB in size submitted as one pdf document) will be accepted via email to the HCC program coordinator via email to: jshupertarick@douglascountyks.org

March 18th & March 25th Applicant Presentations

The Douglas County Heritage Conservation Council will hold virtual open meetings to review grant applications on Thursday, March 18, 2021 at 7 pm and on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 7 pm. Major applicants must make a presentation to the HCC. Target project applicants are invited to make presentations.

May 12th 2021

The Heritage Conservation Council will send grant recommendations to the Douglas County Board of Commissioners on May 12th at 5:30 pm (This date is subject to change.)

ELIGIBILITY - Who May Apply?

Non-profit organizations, universities, K-12 schools, libraries, for-profit businesses including agricultural businesses, cemetery associations, or any unit of local government within Douglas County, Kansas.

Individuals, families, businesses, or out-of-county organizations, or units of government outside of Douglas County must have a Douglas county partner (as listed above) to apply.

Form 990: All 501(c)(3) non-profit applicants must be in current good standing with the IRS regarding their Form 990 filing requirements. A copy of the organization's most recent Form 990 must be submitted as part of the grant application. Cemetery Associations that are not owned by units of local government or that do not have 501(c)3 status must be in good standing with the Kansas Secretary of State.

For projects on properties or related to historic structures, the applicant must hold title to the property or demonstrate full consent of the property owner.

SHPO Approval - For projects that involve physical work related to historic buildings, properties, structures or sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places or Register of Historic Kansas Places, the applicant must have the proposed work reviewed and approved by the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and that written approval must be submitted with the application.

Individuals or organizations with an open or completed Douglas County Natural and Cultural Heritage grant from 2011 through 2020 may apply for 2021 grant funds.

Applicants may apply for multiple grants to support multiple projects.

Project Geographic Location

All grant projects must occur in Douglas County, Kansas.

Project Categories

To be eligible for funding, projects must fall into at least one of the following categories:

1. Historic Structures, Historic Sites, Archaeological Sites, Historic Cemeteries
2. Prairie; woodlands, waterways; habitat restoration/preservation; cultural landscapes, trails
3. Agriculture (working farms, heritage farms; high quality agricultural soils)
4. Stories from before the Civil War to the present including Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area themes: Civil War & pre-Civil War heritage; Settlement stories before and after Civil War; the Enduring Struggle for freedom and the Continuing Struggle for freedom, or Pre-settlement history
5. Elevating under told/little-known stories of underrepresented people: Magnifying the narratives from Indigenous communities, immigrant or refugee populations, or marginalized groups. Giving visibility to little-known but significant places/stories.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Grant application forms are available on the Douglas County Government's website at <https://www.douglascountyks.org/hcc/douglas-county-heritage-grants-and-historic-survey-information>

Applicants are encouraged to submit thorough and concise grant applications with detailed budgets using the budget form provided. Grant applications are subject to the Kansas Open Records Act (KORA). Please see the Douglas County website for the KORA policy and procedures at: <http://douglascountyks.org>

I. APPLICATION EVALUATION & SELECTION

Applications will be reviewed for completeness by the HCC Program Coordinator. After the application deadline, the HCC Program Coordinator will distribute application materials to each of the HCC members for evaluation using the grant evaluation criteria (see below).

Grant applicants submitting a Major Grant application will be required to make a virtual presentation regarding their proposal to the HCC. Applicants submitting a Target Grant application will be given the opportunity to virtually present their projects and answer questions.

The HCC will forward grant award recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners in May 2020. The Board of County Commissioners will make all final funding decisions.

Competitive Evaluation Criteria

The Natural & Cultural Heritage Task Force Final Report concluded that grant applications should be evaluated according to the impact the proposed project would have on conserving our county's heritage. Therefore, as outlined in the Task Force Final Report and modified by the Board of County Commissioners on October 15, 2014, grants are evaluated by the Heritage Conservation Council based on the following criteria:

Highest Criteria (May be entitled to double weight in evaluation)

1. **Conservation and Preservation of Natural and/or Cultural Resources:** The project provides substantial benefit to the conservation and preservation of natural and/or cultural resources.
2. **Matching Resources:** Refers to the presence and extent of additional resources dedicated to the project activities (i.e. in-kind contributions, additional grant funding, cash on hand, loans, project partnerships or volunteer labor).
3. **Sustainability:** Refers to the long-term maintenance of a project. (i.e. what steps will be taken in the future to ensure the preservation of the project and/or make the project available to the public?)

Remaining Criteria (all of equal importance)

Overall Quality of Application: Takes into consideration the grant application's completeness, clarity, thoroughness as well as the overall thoughtfulness of the grant project (i.e. is the budget thorough and reflective of the project activities? Did the applicant fully answer each application question?)

4. **Project Urgency:** Refers to both the nature and extent of preservation threat.
5. **Community Impact:** Refers to how the project contributes to maintaining or enhancing Douglas County's heritage for public benefit. This may include heritage tourism, elevating under told stories, magnifying historically underrepresented voices, bringing awareness to lesser known, yet significant places in our community, providing public educational benefit, and economic impacts (utilizing local products and services, such as Douglas County procured materials, supplies, and labor, whenever feasible).
6. **Connectivity:** Refers to how strongly the project connects to physical sites and interpretive stories, as well as demonstrating a collaborative effort between agencies or organizations.
7. **Educational/Interpretative Value:** Refers to opportunities for the public to acquire educational benefit (i.e. is there evidence of educational programs, educational partnerships, exhibits and/or publications? Does the project illuminate under told or untold stories. Does the project enhance the understanding of cultural and ecological history?)
8. **Public Access:** Refers to whether the project includes opportunity for the public to experience or have contact with the project, including direct physical (on-site) access or virtual access (films, books or digital media). If no public access will be allowed, what is the justification for this project?
9. **Budget:** Refers directly to how reasonable the costs associated with grant project activities outlined in the budget appear. (Do the cost estimates appear valid based on known costs? Are all project costs accounted for? Are bids included in the application?)

10. **Feasibility:** Refers to how realistic the proposed project is and the capacity of the applicant to finish the project by the project deadline. Considerations include the project description, timeframe, projected costs, and having the necessary regulatory approvals or those yet to be secured, such as local permits, zoning approvals, land use rights, and, if applicable, project approval by the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office. Is there evidence that the individual or organization has the capacity to accomplish the project? If the project requires expertise the organization does not have, how will that expertise be supplemented?

11. **Designated Structures, Districts and Landscape:** Such listing and designations include National, State or Local Register of Historic Places for structures and districts; landscapes with national or state recognition and designated as conservation areas; wilderness areas; and historic or scenic trails.

II. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Awarded grant applicants must sign a project agreement with Douglas County. It is recommended that all potential grant applicants read the project agreement prior to submitting a grant application available on the Douglas County website at: <https://www.douglascountyks.org/hcc/douglas-county-heritage-grants-and-historic-survey-information>
- In some instances, conditions specific to the awarding of a particular grant may be added to the project agreement as amendments to the grant agreement.
- Grant project requests may be only partially funded.
- All awarded grant applicants shall submit a final report as outlined in the project agreement. Awarded grants in the amount over \$5,000 will also submit an interim report. Grant recipients of \$50,000 or more must submit quarterly progress reports (not tied to reimbursement) for projects with a duration period of more than six months. These report documents are available at: <https://www.douglascountyks.org/hcc/douglas-county-heritage-grants-and-historic-survey-information>
- An awarded Target Grant project less than or equal to \$5,000 will receive a check from Douglas County for the entire award amount upon full execution of the project agreement. Target Grant projects greater than \$5,000 and Major Grant projects will receive initial payment for 30% of the project work upon full execution of the performance agreement. Remaining grant funds will be distributed based upon receipt and approval by the Heritage Conservation Council of the interim and final reports (see project agreement for details). **All grantees will be required to submit a final report. Failure to submit a report disqualifies grantee from applying for future grants until a final report is submitted.**

III. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS GUIDELINES/TAX CREDIT INFORMATION

If the core of your grant project is historic preservation, the project must be carried out in compliance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for such projects and other applicable codes and regulations at the federal, state and local levels. Please click on the links below:

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings:

http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_8_2.htm

Kansas State Historical Society information about the Register of Historic Kansas Places:
[National Register of Historic Places / Register of Historic Kansas Places](#)

Kansas Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) - Kansas Historical Society <https://www.kshs.org/shpo>

National Resources Conservation Service Practice Standards:
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/technical/cp/ncps/>

Kansas Farm Service Agency:
[http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/stateoffapp?mystate=ks&area=home&subject=landing
&topic=landing](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/stateoffapp?mystate=ks&area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing)

USDA Farm Service Agency Conservation Reserve Program Conservation Practices:
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/appendixb.pdf

Society for American Archaeology Law & Ethics
http://www.saa.org/publicftp/PUBLIC/resources/law_ethics.html

American Association of Museums Best Practices and Code of Ethics:
<https://www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional-practices/codes-of-ethics-for-museums/> and <https://www2.aam-us.org/resources/ethics-standards-and-best-practices/standards>

Oral History Standards: <http://www.oralhistory.org/?s=Standards>

Historic Preservation Tax Incentives/Kansas Tax Credit Program: <https://www.kshs.org/p/tax-credit-basics/14673>
<https://www.kshs.org/p/tax-credit-basics/14673>