



# Preservation Trust Fund Public Access Grant Application

Visit [vof.org/ptf](http://vof.org/ptf) for more info.

Submit questions and completed application to [grants@vof.org](mailto:grants@vof.org).

## Applicant Information

Applicant name

Partner organization *(required if applicant is not state/local govt.)*

Contact person

Phone number

Email address

Mailing address      345

Type of applicant/ partner organization	Individual	Non-profit*	Local	State	Regional
	Tribal	VOF	Other		

*\*If you are a registered non-profit, provide documentation that you are registered and in good standing with the State Corporation Commission. The URL of the organization's SCC Business Entity Details page will suffice: <https://sccfile.scc.virginia.gov/Find/Business>*

## Project Information

Project name

Project location (street address, tax map parcel number, lat/long, or UTM)

Grant funding request (min. request \$10,000; past grants have averaged \$100,000)

Would you like to be considered for any other VOF grant program if eligible?      Yes      No

A real estate interest must be conveyed to VOF or a local government to be eligible for PTF funding. Such interest could include ownership, an easement, a right of way, or a lease. Please select which will be used in this project:

Fee-simple acquisition (ownership)

Open-space easement

Right of way (such as trail)

Lease (minimum 5 years)

Unsure (VOF can work with you to determine the best tool)

## Project Summary

Provide a summary description of this project. (150 words or less)

## Public Access Characteristics

### Calendar

The project site will be open to the public daily (excluding nights/holidays).

The project site will be open to the public at least 75% of the year.

The project site will be open to the public 50-75% of the year.

The project site will be open to the public less than 50% of the year.

Additional information:

### Area

100% of the project site will be open to the public.

At least 75% of the project site will be open to the public.

At least 50% of the project site will be open to the public.

Additional information:

### Accessibility (select all that apply)

The project site is accessible by foot, bike, scooter, etc. (connected to sidewalk or an existing public park).

The project site is accessible by public transportation.

The project site has public parking.

Additional information:

## Plan Alignment

Indicate which of the following plan goals the project supports (select all that apply)

Local comprehensive plan or master plan      Date of plan:      Page #

Regional plan      Date of plan:      Page #

Virginia Outdoors Plan      Date of plan:      Page #

Use the space below to briefly describe any other plans that support this project:

## Project Description

Describe the project site. Include the size of the parcel and a description of the current conditions. Is it a recreational, scenic, cultural, historic resource or a significant landscape feature? Will it protect a recreational, scenic, cultural, historic resource or a significant landscape feature?

Is this project part of a larger movement (e.g. have other projects of a similar nature happened near this one? Is this one of many that are ongoing in this area?

How will this area be managed in the future?

## Community Description

Describe the need for this project and its importance to the community. Address how this project will better serve the community. If the community is considered underserved, please describe how.

Describe the support this project has from the community. Please attach documentation like letters of support.

List any partners or partnerships related to this project. These do not have to be groups that are financially invested in the project, just those that participate or help with any aspect of the project. Please briefly describe their involvement.

Provide any other information about this project that makes it unique/special. If the area has special significance to the community, please describe it here.

## Schedule

Describe the timeline/plan of work for this project. Include who is expected to do the work and when. Work that has already been completed toward the project should be mentioned here.

## Budget

Total cost of the project: \$

Amount requested from PTF: \$

Amount requested from other funding sources: \$

Explain the budget for this project. Include any additional funding from partners, grants, volunteer hours, or materials or services donated.

Explain if the grant funding is a key component to getting the project started or completed.

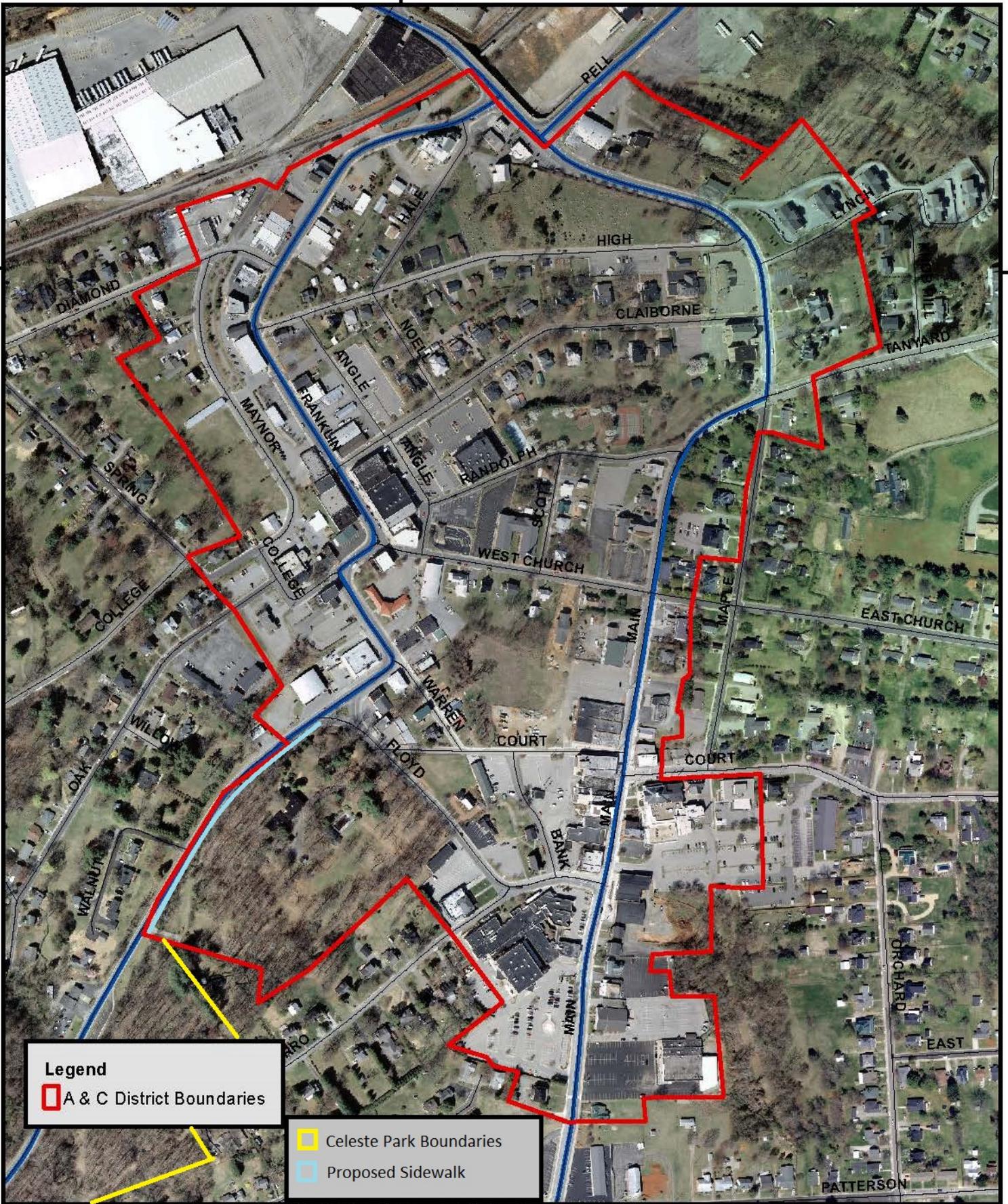
Address how reduced funding would impact the scope of the project. Please address viability and scope at 75% and 50% of the requested funding.



79°53'30"W

37°0'0"N

37°0'0"N



**Legend**

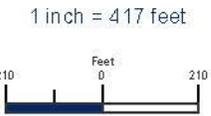
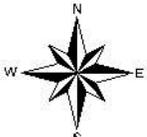
- A & C District Boundaries

- Celeste Park Boundaries
- Proposed Sidewalk

79°53'30"W

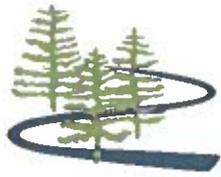


**Arts & Culture District BOUNDARIES**  
 DATE CREATED: 3/5/2015  
 TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT, VA



Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic  
 GCS North America 1983  
 Datum: D North America 1983

Map created MM/DD/YYYY by jgibson  
 This map is for general reference and display purposes only.



# FRANKLIN COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

2150 Sontag Road  
Rocky Mount, VA 24151  
Phone: 540-483-9293  
Fax: 540-483-0040  
[www.playfranklincounty.com](http://www.playfranklincounty.com)

December 17, 2020

Virginia Outdoor Foundation  
600 East Main St., 4th Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Virginia Outdoors Foundation,

Franklin County supports the Town of Rocky Mount's efforts in developing Celeste Park. Trails are the main feature of this park and would meet an unmet need for the community.

This project is very important to the citizens of Franklin County because Rocky Mount is the most densely populated area of the county and it gives them an in town option to experience trails through a wooded area and is located just a quarter mile outside of the Downtown district.

We are willing to aid in this effort by offering our guidance and expertise on park and trail development as needed. Franklin County will also help with the promotion of these new features when complete.

Franklin County is committed to continuing our work of trail building throughout the county. Trails are the most frequently requested recreational infrastructure from citizens and are necessary to meet demand. Trails are also key for our region's economic growth and tourism. An example of this is Virginia Blue Ridge's recent establishing of our area at the "East Coast Mountain Biking Capital".

Thank you to VOF for supporting such important projects throughout our beautiful state!

Sincerely,

Paul Chapman  
Director of Parks and Recreation



December 16, 2020

RE: Get Outdoors letter of support

Dear Virginia Outdoors Foundation,

Roanoke Outside Foundation supports the Town of Rocky Mount's efforts in developing Celeste Park. Trails are the main feature of this park and would meet an unmet need for not only the community but also the region.

This project is very important to the citizens of the Roanoke region because Rocky Mount is the most densely populated area in Franklin County, and the park gives them an in-town option to experience trails through a wooded area located just a quarter mile outside of the Historic Rocky Mount district.

We are willing to aid in this effort by offering our guidance and expertise on park and trail development as needed. The Roanoke Outside Foundation will also help with the promotion of these new features when complete.

Roanoke Outside leverages the region's outdoor assets to create vibrant communities that attract talent and business investment. The Town of Rocky Mount has been making significant quality of place improvements and Celeste Park will fill a void, providing open space for social gatherings, exercise, and connecting with nature.

Thank you to VOF for supporting such important projects throughout our beautiful state!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pete Eshelman".

Pete Eshelman,  
Director

TOP STORY

# Celeste Park is a work in progress

JOE BARATY Nov 20, 2020 Updated Nov 20, 2020 0

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A sign at the entrance to Celeste Park showcases the park's attributes.

Photo by JOE BARATY

Furne

Photc

JOE BARATY

**M**ost people understand the concept of curb appeal, particularly folks that are in the real estate business. It's that initial impression one gets, whether positive or negative, when they first see a property from the outside. Whether it's paint, shingles, windows, lawns or gardens ... a customer's interest will be greatly affected by what they first see.

It's not much different when it comes to small towns. Many visitors will judge a town from the initial impression received from the condition, appearance and presentation of the things that they first experience.

Some of my favorite small towns are ones I fell in love with the first time I drove through them. There is something about their visual character that begs you to stop and enjoy ... or even pack up and move there. Hillsborough, North Carolina does that to me, so does Damascus, Virginia. I find in my travels that I have become a sort of connoisseur of small towns.

There are many things that I look for in a small town with cleanliness being at the top of the list. I love to see street lamps, tree-lined streets, restored historic buildings and community parks, which I want to discuss today.



For a town of its size, Rocky Mount has been truly blessed with a number of lovely and diverse parks, each one offering visitors and residents a unique experience. Perhaps the most recognizable of these would be Mary Elizabeth Park in the heart of downtown, a delightful, well-maintained favorite for local families.

For those seeking a bit more privacy, Mary Bethune Park at the end of East Street is just the thing. If you want to teach the kids to fish you can always hang out at Gilley's Park at the end of Trail Drive behind the middle school. Or you can make history come alive for the family

when you visit the Veterans' Memorial Park off South Main Street. While there they can frolic at the adjoining Lynch Park, which is maintained by Franklin County.

As residents we fight the natural habit of taking these wonderful gifts for granted, but I can assure you that they each play a large role on raising the aesthetic value of our town to visitors and guests.

Our most recent addition to this list of unique and special places in town is Celeste Park off Franklin Street just south of downtown. Donated to the town by the Greer Family in memory of their daughter Celeste, this 6-acre track is now the largest park in Rocky Mount.

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I have been driving by it daily for the past several years (taking it for granted) and never until this past week have I wandered onto the property. The park is well-marked from the road with visible signage and boasts a large parking area, all very inviting.

You enter the park crossing a graveled bridge over Furnace Creek, a 2009 addition by the Town of Rocky Mount. From there, the trail cuts through the center of a large grassy field surrounded by woods on all sides. Along the right-hand side you can faintly hear the rippling waters of Furnace Creek, which shadows the entire length of the property.

The trail narrows as it enters the woods on the far side of the field and meanders through this wooded area alongside the creek to the end of the property. On the town's website, it says the master plan calls for "a quiet, contemplative spot with walking trails ... and stream-

side relaxation.” And for the most part, that is exactly what I found. It was difficult to realize you were actually in the middle of a downtown residential area, it was truly that peaceful.



But at the same time, it was also quite clear to me as I hiked along the creek, that this park was an unfinished work in progress. It seemed that for every nice feature I came across, I was also visualizing the perfect environment for things that I wasn't seeing. What I found myself visualizing and imagining was the potential for a true gem in the family of Rocky Mount parks.

There have been some admirable efforts since 2009 to help the park reach that potential. In 2012, a grant program enabled a group of students from Ferrum College to install some new features, and the Williams Family has been involved as volunteers through the town's Adopt-a-Park Program. In spite of these fine efforts, there is still so much more to be done.

I had the opportunity to chat with Matt Moore, the new assistant town manager/community development director for Rocky Mount. Matt brings 22 years of successful experience in the parks and recreation field to his new job here. In our conversation he made a point of telling me, “I will be meeting soon with town staff to discuss Celeste and the other town parks to identify opportunities and priorities for improvements.”



If Moore is successful in making Celeste a priority, that does not eliminate the need for town citizens to be involved in this worthy project. There will still be the need for volunteers. There will still be the need for resource donations.

If you would like to know more about this delightful park and ways that you can be involved in helping out, contact Matt Moore at [mmoore@rockymountva.org](mailto:mmoore@rockymountva.org) or 483-0907.

Until then, go get wild and visit some of our outstanding parks.

0 comments

Tags [Rocky Mount](#) [Town](#) [Park](#) [Matt Moore](#) [Highway](#) [Transports](#) [City Planning](#) [Building Industry](#)

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Dec 16, 2020

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Updated Dec 16, 2020

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Article with images +2

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