

LCRA Community Grant Narrative:

1. How does this project benefit the community?

Dripping Springs Ranch Park (DSRP) was purchased by the City in 2008 and has transformed from a community park into an important park with a multi-use facility for residents of Dripping Springs, Hays County, and the surrounding area. The facility was built in 2013 complete with a climate-controlled event room and kitchen, an open-air arena with stalls and wash racks, and an open-air vendor area. DSRP has become a key spot for recreation, education, cultural events, and emergency response.

The park provides year-round youth and adult programs and community events that draw attendees from throughout Central Texas. With our rapidly growing community, DSRP continues to commit to celebrating the City's agricultural heritage while also supporting the local economy. The Community Rodeo, multiple horse shows, and the Hays County Livestock Show are some of the signature events that draw big crowds, having a positive impact on tourism, hospitality, and local expenditures.

This project will benefit the community directly by making this city-owned building safer, more functional, and more energy-efficient. Roof repairs, substituting aged skylights with metal sheeting, and installing a reflective elastomeric coating will shield the building's structure and enhance comfort and usability for residents and guests throughout the year.

Currently, roof leaks and extreme indoor temperatures restrict access to essential areas of the building, particularly in the summer and inclement weather. This interferes with programs, restricts rentals, and negatively impacts the visitor experience. Fixing these issues will create a more reliable and climate-friendly environment that meets the needs of our growing and diverse population.

Major community benefits from the repairs and improvements are:

- Increased access to programs such as 4-H, clinics, educational workshops, and recreation for youths and adults.
- Improved conditions of rental spaces for local organizations, nonprofits, and businesses, supporting entrepreneurship and economic development.
- Enhanced emergency preparedness, since DSRP operates as a community warming/cooling center as well as an official Hays County evacuation center, with specialty areas for large animals.
- Increased economic benefit from increased tourism, event bookings, and public-private partnerships.

- Environmental sustainability from energy-efficient improvements that reduce long-term utility and maintenance expenses.

The project will, in total, protect a valuable public resource, enhance community quality of life, and facilitate the continued growth and resilience of Dripping Springs. It demonstrates the City's dedication to equitable, forward-thinking public spaces as essential opportunities for community connection, heritage, and advancement.

2. How would this grant contribute to the health and development of your community and improve its attractiveness to public and private enterprises?

This grant would directly support the health and development of our community by allowing necessary repairs and energy-efficient improvements to a crucial city-owned facility, Dripping Springs Ranch Park. This park acts as a central gathering place for residents, neighboring communities, and visitors.

DSRP offers a wide range of programs and events that encourage lifelong learning, cultural engagement, youth development, and community unity. These include equestrian events, livestock shows, 4-H meetings, public forums, banquets, educational clinics, and recreational activities that connect people of all ages.

However, the facility's aging metal roof is deteriorating and leaks significantly during rainfall. This leads to interruptions in events, safety concerns, and damage to city assets. The original fiberglass skylights, which are worn and leaking, are no longer necessary after the full facility conversion to energy-efficient LED lighting in 2023 and 2024. In addition, the roof lacks proper insulation, contributing to high utility costs and excessive indoor heat, particularly during the hottest months.

With LCRA grant support, the City of Dripping Springs would be able to move forward with repairing damage, replacing skylights with metal sheeting, sealing leak points, and applying a reflective elastomeric coating to improve temperature control.

These upgrades will:

- Increase the facility's reliability and safety;
- Boost energy efficiency and lower long-term costs; and
- Provide a more comfortable and usable space year-round.

By extending the life of this important public facility, this project supports the long-term sustainability of essential community programs while making the space more appealing to both public and private users. These improvements will attract external event

planners, local organizations, and regional agencies looking for a dependable, weather-tight, and professional venue.

Investing in DSRP shows a commitment to maintaining inclusive and forward-thinking public infrastructure that benefits both current residents and future users. This creative step towards an energy-efficient building supports community health and development and also enhances Dripping Springs as a destination for regional events, private rentals, and long-term partnerships. This project preserves and improves a vital community asset, providing long-lasting benefits for the City and its stakeholders.

3. How would this grant improve the quality and quantity of services essential for the development of your community?

The project will directly enhance the quality and quantity of services at Dripping Springs Ranch Park by fixing infrastructure issues that restrict programming, rentals, and community use. Replacing old skylights, fixing current roof damage, and applying a reflective sealing coat will enhance facility conditions, reduce interruptions, and allow for increased service throughout the year.

Currently, multiple rental and program spaces have ongoing roof leaks that interfere with operations during and following rainfall. These problems compromise equipment and facility components, and they also adversely affect our rental customers. A few customers have stated that the leaks have harmed their business and make them less inclined to return. Furthermore, insufficient insulation results in extreme indoor heat during warmer months, especially in our open-air arena. This creates difficulty in providing regular programming and obtaining summer bookings. As a result, our facility that usually hosts 2-3 events each weekend, sees significantly reduced activity during the hottest months.

Despite continual staff efforts to maintain a high-quality level of service and positive customer experience, facility limitations regularly cause programs to be dropped, relocated, or reprioritized to make way for fee-paying rentals. This puts a strain on relationships with facility users and restricts access to programs that aid youth development, lifelong learning, and community connection.

The proposed energy-efficient roof improvements will create a more stable, climate-resilient facility that will enable the City to:

- Provide unobstructed access to all covered and indoor areas;
- Increase seasonal programming for youth and adults;
- Boost weekend bookings and community usage; and
- Reduce maintenance and utility expenses.

By ensuring a safe, usable, and energy-efficient facility, this project enhances the City's capacity to deliver high-quality services and expands the number of events and partnerships we can accommodate. These improvements will help DSRP to grow towards its potential as a regional destination for recreation, education, culture, and economic growth.

4. Why is this project needed?

Dripping Springs Ranch Park faces significant infrastructure issues that threaten its capacity to operate safely and efficiently throughout the year. The project proposal seeks to address these concerns by implementing roof repairs and energy-efficient upgrades that will enhance the facility's lifespan and lower long-term operational expenses.

The project will involve required repairs for the extensive roof leaks that have plagued the facility. If left unrepaired, these leaks compromise the structure of the building and the integrity of its interior space. 160 skylights were initially installed to bring in necessary natural light, but they have now outlived their lifespan. The paper-thin fiberglass panels have significant damage and are a major cause of active leaks. Since the recent changeover to high-efficiency LED lighting, which has enhanced illumination and its brightness, skylights are now unnecessary. The project intends to entirely remove the heavily aged skylights and cover them with solid metal panels to return the roof to a safe and stable condition.

Further roof repair will involve replacing broken or missing fasteners and tightening loose screws to fix other water penetration points and reduce future wear. Once repairs have been completed, the roof will be coated with a high-performance elastomeric coating. This coating will greatly increase the lifespan of the roof, seal the repairs, and enhance energy efficiency by reducing interior temperatures by as much as 10 degrees in both climate-controlled and open-air spaces. It also has a 10-year warranty that can be extended with future reapplications, making it a cost-effective long-term solution.

DSRP is a valuable multi-purpose facility for the City of Dripping Springs, Hays County, and surrounding communities. It hosts multiple activities, such as youth and adult recreational programs, community events, Town Hall meetings, polling operations, and emergency responses. The facility also provides an evacuation center for individuals and animals with a focus on large livestock in case of regional emergencies, including wildfires. Having a safe, weather-tight roof is crucial to accommodate these varied and critical uses.

Roof leaks have already disrupted numerous programs and events in the last year. In inclement weather, staff have utilized tarps, buckets, and warning signs to contain

facility roof leaks and keep visitors safe. One of the most memorable events was the Texas Junior Roller Derby's New Year Revolution Tournament, which hosted teams from throughout Texas and the United States. Leaks above the competition track required staff to create resourceful temporary solutions to keep players safe and prevent the cancellation of the event. Also, these leak-affected areas serve as spaces for elections and emergency shelters, causing severe reliability and safety concerns.

The facility's primary arena, which is open-air, consistently experiences dangerous high temperatures throughout the hottest months. The extreme heat limits use and cuts down on rentals from June through September. Events like the Dripping Springs Rodeo, a Memorial Day Weekend tradition, are also endangered by extreme temperatures. Without better temperature control, these conditions endanger animals, staff, and community members.

DSRP sees thousands of visitors annually, and these upgrades are vital to ensure ongoing access, educational program delivery, and emergency preparedness. By restoring the roof's integrity, improving energy efficiency, and enhancing thermal comfort, this project will strengthen community resilience, support year-round operations, and stabilize event-based revenues that support the park's sustainability.

5. Please explain how often other individuals or groups within your community will be able to use the building. Please provide details on how much of the building will be used by others and how often.

Dripping Springs Ranch Park is a city-owned facility open seven days a week, year-round. It serves as a valuable community center for many groups of people and organizations. The facility is used daily by multiple visitors, different organizations, and community programs, while also hosting a variety of event rentals.

Weekly activities include:

- Mondays: Dripping Springs 4-H Club meetings and Hays County 4-H Horse Program ride nights.
- Tuesdays: Barrel racing exhibitions and series hosted by the Texas Hill Country Barrel Racing Association and Arrow Wranglers Archery Club.
- Wednesdays: Tai Chi practice sessions and The Dripping Springs Farmers Market.
- Thursdays: Texas Beef Initiative team roping practice and Open Skate Night with Drip Skate, as well as our Tween Scene program for youth ages 9-14.

Monthly meetings include:

- Mondays: Dripping Springs Lions Club Meetings 1st and 3rd weeks and Dripping Springs Ag Boosters 1st week of the month.

- Tuesdays: Hays County Livestock Exposition (HCLE) Board meetings 4th week of the month.

The entire facility is utilized throughout the year for a variety of events including banquets, community meetings, trade shows, blood drives, equestrian events, livestock shows, polling operations, educational seminars, and emergency evacuation shelters. The last week in January the facility hosts the Hays County Livestock Show, where thousands of youth from across the county show livestock and projects in hopes of being awarded scholarships at the HCLE auction. In addition to the Monday night Hays County 4-H Horse Program, our arena is the site for three Hays County Point Shows and has been the site for the June District 10 4-H Horse Show for the last few years. Our Main Event Room has been the site for numerous public meetings, some of which have included TxDOT, Hays County Bond Open House, Fitzhugh Safety Study Open House, City of Dripping Springs Comprehensive Plan Open House, and City of Dripping Springs Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Master Plan meetings. DSRP has had the privilege of hosting the 2024 and 2025 Texas Special Olympics Opening Ceremony, and we hope to welcome them back in 2026.

Aside from outside rentals and partnerships, Dripping Springs Ranch Park staff organize a variety of events and programs throughout the year. They include the Dripping Springs Rodeo in partnership with Dripping Springs Ag Boosters, Easter Eggstravaganza, Turkey Trot and other 1k/5k/10k runs, Fall Festival, Haunted House, Coyote Kids Nature Camp, Tween Scene, Spring Break Camp, and our Western Wonderland Ice Rink and Community Trail of Lights. Each event leaves a memorable experience for visitors while bringing family entertainment within reach of all people in the community at an affordable price. Other programming partnerships at DSRP include Skateboarding Camps, Drip Run & Yoga Club, and Master Naturalist Nature Walks. Both residents and visitors are attracted to these programs, which utilize the facility and grounds to their greatest potential.

Even in the summer months when Dripping Springs Ranch Park has fewer reservations due to excessive heat, we have a great number of visitors. Our programs department creatively uses the park and facility to offer Family Nerf Night, Family Campouts, Family Dodgeball, and Family Skate Night. We can transform our event room into a roller rink, archery range, or whatever other fun family activity is requested. The centerpiece of our facility is a multi-use open-air arena where equestrians can ride. We sell annual arena memberships, and numerous riders from surrounding areas haul in and purchase day passes to utilize the facility. Our 119-acre park continues to be frequented by park visitors utilizing the trails and outdoor amenities. These guests will stop into the facility for restroom use, water, or to discuss upcoming events and park projects with staff. The lovely landscaping in front of our building is kept up by the Hays County Master

Gardeners. The park also serves as a project base for Hays County Master Naturalists, who conduct projects and help coordinate Eagle Scout projects.

The City has always encouraged education and DSRP has hosted various training opportunities. The Precinct 4 Constable Office and North Hays County Fire & EMS utilize multiple spaces to conduct various drills to better prepare their teams, especially for large scale events within our facility. In more recent years, City Staff have utilized their skills and experiences to lead trainings for fellow City Staff, along with outside organizations and community members. Staff at DSRP have hosted two Large Animal Behavior & Handling Safety Courses heading into wildfire season to prepare staff, Hays County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members, and willing community volunteers on how to properly intake horses and other livestock. The City of Dripping Springs Emergency Preparedness & Homeland Security Director partners with organizations and offers CPR, Stop the Bleed, and other important FEMA training courses relevant to all departments within the city.

Overall, many people or groups use the building every day. The center is designed to be a blank canvas, and staff strive to be creative and flexible with bookings, ensuring that members of the public and partner organizations have continued access.

This level of community use cements the building's status as a central space for civic engagement, education, entertainment, and cultural events.

6. Please explain how the organization's operating account and/or reserve funds are being utilized towards the project.

The cost for the proposed roof project is \$600,000.00. The City of Dripping Springs budgeted \$150,000.00 in the Dripping Springs Ranch Park (DSRP) Fund in FY 2025 for this project. These budgeted funds will be carried forward to FY 2026. The balance of funding needed will be pulled from the City's Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund, which is being utilized by the Ranch Park in its capacity as an "event center."

7. Please describe the energy-efficient component(s) of your project.

This proposed project incorporates several key energy-efficiency improvements that will enhance the performance and sustainability of Dripping Springs Ranch Park. These components include the replacement of deteriorated skylights with metal sheeting, targeted roof repairs to address leak points, and the application of a high-performance reflective elastomeric coating.

The 160 original skylights, once essential for natural lighting, are now obsolete following the facility-wide transition in 2023–2024 to high-efficiency LED lighting. Replacing the aged fiberglass skylights with solid metal panels will eliminate the numerous water penetration points that lead to leaks and offer a stronger solution to increase the longevity of the roof's lifespan.

The elastomeric roof coating, made from flexible silicone, adds another layer of energy performance. Its reflective properties deflect sunlight, reduce roof surface temperatures by up to 10 degrees, and lower the temperature in open-air and climate-controlled spaces, lessening the load on HVAC systems. The coating also acts as a durable, rubberized membrane that expands and contracts with temperature changes, preventing cracks, peeling, and further deterioration. Its seamless application creates an airtight, waterproof barrier that reduces air and moisture infiltration, boosting the overall energy efficiency of the building.

This sustainable roofing solution is backed by a renewable 10-year material warranty, making it both a long-term and cost-effective investment. Collectively, these improvements will extend the roof's lifespan, reduce energy consumption and utility costs, and provide a more comfortable and environmentally responsible facility for the community.

8. Is there anything else you want the Review Committee to know about this grant proposal?

We believe this project is a great fit for the LCRA Community Grant Program because it directly supports the program's goals of improving quality of life, upgrading community infrastructure, and promoting public safety and sustainability. The changes to Dripping Springs Ranch Park will have a broad and lasting impact. This project will create a safer, more energy-efficient, and more accessible space for residents, regional visitors, and partner organizations.

The facility is not just a cultural and recreational center, it also plays a crucial role during emergencies and weather events, making these improvements important for both function and community. Support from this grant will help ensure the park can continue serving a large and growing population with programs, events, and services that reflect our city and region's unique character.

Our team has carefully evaluated the project, and we are ready to start if awarded this grant. We have a clear plan, experienced staff, and have had numerous conversations with reliable vendors. Our internal team has the knowledge and resources to oversee the project to completion. We have a strong track record of managing city projects successfully and on time.

The City of Dripping Springs is committed to long-term sustainability through proactive maintenance and energy-saving upgrades. Community support for this project is strong. Input from program participants, event organizers, and facility users has consistently highlighted roof and insulation issues as top concerns. This grant would allow us to address those needs and keep investing in a facility that boosts economic development, community pride, and local identity.

Thank you for considering our proposal. We are eager for the chance to advance this project with your support and to show the significant benefits this investment will bring to our community.