

RCW 27.34.420 Washington state historic cemetery preservation capital grant program.

(1) The Washington state historic cemetery preservation capital grant program is created in the department.

(2) The capital grant program is intended to benefit the public by preserving outstanding examples of the state's historical heritage, enabling historic cemeteries to continue to serve their communities, and honoring the military veterans buried within them.

(3) Subject to appropriation, grants may be awarded each biennium for construction, renovation, or rehabilitation projects that preserve the historic character, features, and materials of the cemetery, or that maintain or improve the functions of the cemetery.

(4) A capital grant award may not exceed fifty thousand dollars, adjusted biennially for inflation. The department may not require applicants to provide matching funds.

(5) Eligible applicants for capital grants include cemetery property owners, nonprofit organizations, and local governments.

(6) Applications for the capital grant program must be submitted to the department in a form and manner prescribed by the department. The applications must include a history of the cemetery which the department shall maintain on file.

(7) The director shall establish a committee to review applications. The committee shall consist of at least five members with expertise or association with historic preservation, cemetery associations, local cemetery boards, and other associations or professional organizations the director deems appropriate. When evaluating and prioritizing projects, the committee shall consider the following criteria:

(a) The relative historical significance of the cemetery;

(b) Whether the proposed project will result in lower costs of maintenance and operations; and

(c) The relative percentage of military burials in the cemetery.

(8) The conditions in this subsection must be met by recipients of funding in order to satisfy the public benefit requirements of the historic cemetery preservation capital grant program.

(a) The committee shall provide the department a prioritized list of projects for funding. The department and grant recipient must execute a contract before work on the grant project begins. The contract must specify public benefit and minimum maintenance requirements.

(b) Grant recipients must proactively maintain their historic cemetery for a minimum of ten years.

(c) Public access to the exterior of properties that are not visible from a public right-of-way must be provided under reasonable terms and circumstances, including the requirement that visits by nonprofit organizations or school groups must be offered at least one day per year. Tribal access must be provided under reasonable terms and circumstances to historic cemeteries in which there are Indian burials.

(9) Projects must be initiated within one year of funding approval and completed within two years, unless an extension is provided in writing by the department.

(10) If a recipient of an historic cemetery preservation capital grant, or subsequent owner of a property that was assisted by a grant, takes any action within ten years of the award with respect to the assisted property such as dismantlement, removal, substantial alteration, or any other action inconsistent with the property's

status as a cemetery, the grant must be repaid in full within one year. [2016 c 102 § 1.]